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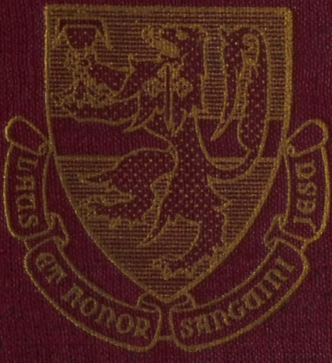
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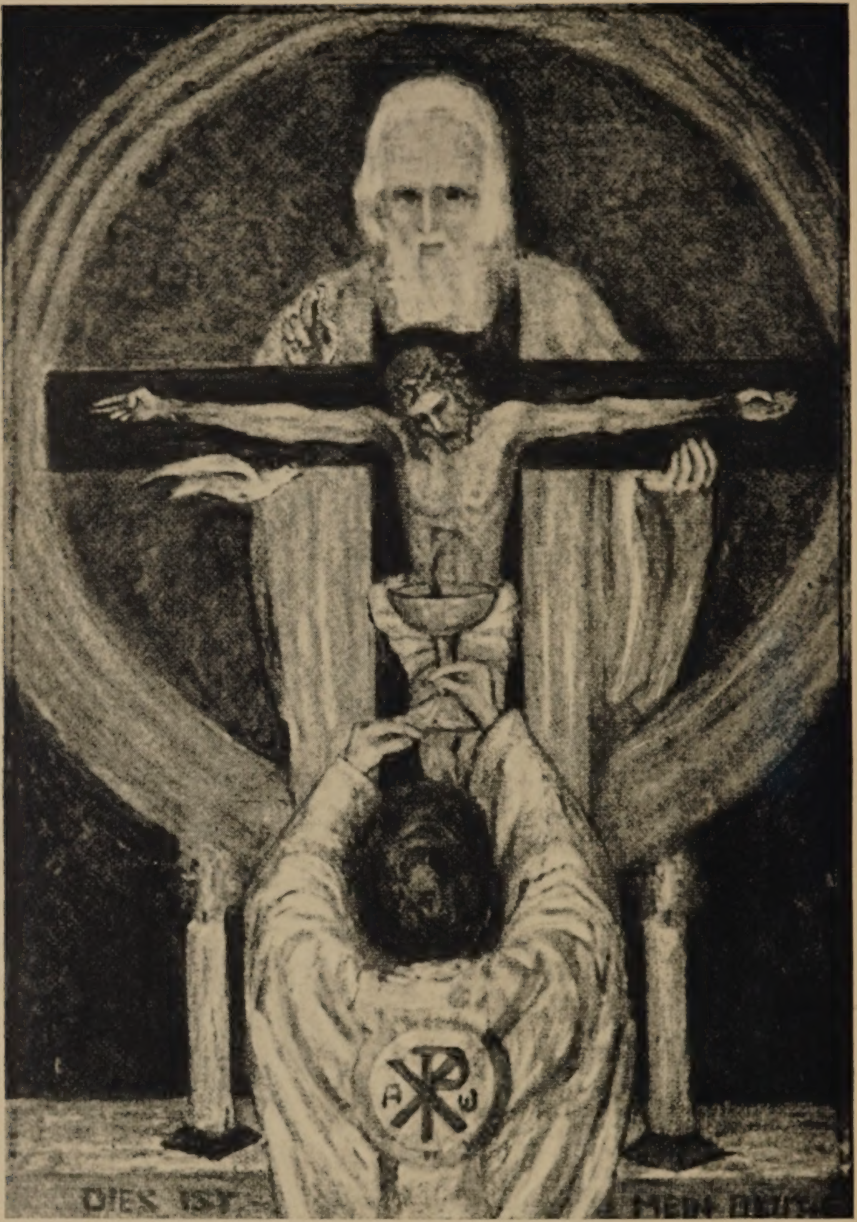

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"You know that you were redeemed . . . not with perishable things, with silver or gold, but with the Precious Blood of Christ. . . ." (1 Peter I, 18-19)

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A History of the Sisters of the
Congregation of the Precious Blood
Salem Heights, Dayton, Ohio
1834 – 1944

By
A SISTER OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

1945
Sisters of the Precious Blood, Dayton, Ohio

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TO

BLESSED GASPAR DEL BUFALO

"The Herald of the Precious Blood"

and to

His Army of Faithful Followers

who bear

with him

the glorious title

of the price of our redemption

The Fathers, Brothers, and Sisters

of the

Congregation of the Precious Blood

3248

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The Most Reverend John T. McNicholas
Archbishop of Cincinnati

Preface

The fascinating history of religious communities reveals their common origin in poverty, in sacrifice, and in suffering. Christian living means a constant effort to move Christward and to follow the Divine Saviour of men. This principle has special application to a religious community. Each institute must have its Bethlehem, its Nazareth, and its Calvary. Its Bethlehem has few candidates, little, if any, resources, and receives scant encouragement. Its Nazareth is silently ignored, sometimes faces criticism and even strong opposition. Its Calvary knows suffering, sacrifice, and humiliation, before rising to the life of a well-organized community.

From the cradle of poverty, through years of sacrifice and struggle, until the present day, the work begun by Mother Maria Anna Brunner in Switzerland has been blessed by God. The solicitous care of her family of six children (two of whom became priests and one a religious) made Mother Brunner realize her own human frailty and the necessity of complete dependence on God. In her simplicity, the humble mother never suspected that God would use her as an instrument to further, with far-reaching results, devotion to the Precious Blood of His Divine Son. Today hundreds of spiritual daughters of Mother Brunner are striving to imitate their Foundress in her devotion to the Eucharistic Christ and His Precious Blood.

Since no previous history of this Congregation, whose Motherhouse is at Salem Heights, Dayton, Ohio, has been published, this volume will find many interested readers. We hope that it will plant the seed of many promising vocations.

Among the documents preserved in the archives of the Congregation, the author found the treasured writings of Reverend Francis de Sales Brunner—Mother Brunner's eldest son. Trained chronologists of the Community have compared the present narrative with these original documents.

For forty-three years the Sisters, like the Brothers of the Society, were directed in their religious life by the Father Provincial of the Society. In this volume, therefore, the early history of the Priests' Society is treated. In 1887 the Sisters' Community was reorganized and the Mother Superior of the Congregation was elected by the Sisters. Previously she had been appointed by the Father Provincial.

This centenary year in America recalls the humble beginnings in 1834 in Switzerland, when Mother Brunner, with a few associates, began a simple but austere community life. Her remarkable spirit of prayer and tireless work continue in her devoted daughters today. Mother Brunner died January 15, 1836. For twenty-three years after her death, Father Brunner continued to direct the Community in Switzerland and in the United States. His saintly character, his austerity, his love of the religious life left their lasting impress on the Congregation.

Through the efforts of Father Brunner, some members of the little Community were transferred to America in 1844 and, fortunately, received, at the time of their arrival, the protection and encouragement of the second Bishop of Cincinnati, the Right Reverend John Baptist Purcell. His fatherly interest continued in his successors, the Metropolitans of the Province of Cincinnati. The blessing of God seems assured in the prayerful spirit of the Congregation. The little Community of 1844 has had a consistent growth during a century. Today the living members exceed seven hundred. The Constitution of the Sisters has received Pontifical approval.

There is a crusade of prayer today in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati that the cause of Mother Brunner may be advanced if it be pleasing to God. May the devoted and laborious daughters of the saintly Foundress continue to follow in her footsteps.

+ John T. McNicholas

Archbishop of Cincinnati

December 8, 1944

CONTENTS

Page

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS VI
PREFACE VII

PART ONE: FOUNDATION (1764-1844)

I A Pious Mother 3
II A Zealous Missionary 20
III Castle Loewenberg 37
IV Rome, the Center of Devotion to the Precious Blood . . . 51
V A Far-reaching Work Begun and a Life's Work Ended . . 61
VI Father Brunner Becomes a Missionary of the Precious Blood 73
VII Off for America! 87

PART TWO: EXPANSION (1844-1887)

I Foundations in Northern Ohio 105
II Foundations in Western Ohio 121
III Community Life in Pioneer Days 141
IV Father Brunner Goes Abroad 153
V Schellenberg, a European Foundation 173
VI Last Days of Father Brunner 187
VII An American Curé d'Ars 197
VIII A Treasury of Holy Relics 215
IX Father Henry Helps Solve Important Problems 225

PART THREE: ORGANIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT (1887-1936)

I Under a New Regime 239
II Progress under Mother Ludovica 267

Page

III Mother Emma 280

IV The Burden of Government Falls on Mother Josephine. 299

V Mother Emma Carries On: Educational Progress 315

VI Building Projects and Various Activities 333

VII Mother Agreda Assumes Charge 346

VIII Jubilee Joys and Sorrows 365

EPILOGUE: IN THE HALL OF MEMORIES 389

APPENDIX I

Chronological Summary of Events, 1936-1944 397

Sermon by the Very Reverend Joseph M. Marling 405

Tribute by Archbishop John T. McNicholas 410

APPENDIX II

Insignia of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Precious Blood 412

Statistics of the Sisters of the Precious Blood, 1943-1944 413

APPENDIX III

A General Survey of Sources 416

NOTES ON THE TEXT 418

INDEX 445

ILLUSTRATIONS

Frontispiece

Facing page

The Most Reverend John T. McNicholas, Archbishop of Cincinnati VII

View of Muemliswil, Canton Solothurn, Switzerland 4

Maria Anna Brunner: The Pious Mother 16

Castle Loewenberg before and after the Fire of April 14, 1889 ... 40

Blessed Gaspar del Bufalo 52

The Very Reverend Francis de Sales Brunner, Missionary of the Precious Blood 78

"Cradle" of the Community, New Riegel, Ohio; Second Convent Building, New Riegel, Ohio 114

Former Motherhouse, Maria Stein, Ohio; Old Convent of the Visitation, Minster, Ohio 124

Convent of the Sisters of the Precious Blood, Schellenberg, Liechtenstein 182

First Provincial in America, 1844-1859 188

The Very Reverend Andrew Kunkler, Second Provincial, 1860-1874 198

Main Altar of the Relic Chapel, Maria Stein, Ohio 222

Mother Mary Kunigunda, Second Mother General, 1858-1887 ... 248

Mother Mary Ludovica, 1887-1899 268

Mother Mary Emma, 1899-1905, 1911-1924 282

Community Buildings Completed in 1901 at Maria Stein, Ohio ... 284

Views of Kneipp Springs, Rome City, Indiana 290

Mother Mary Josephine, 1905-1911 300

St. Mary's Mission House, Dayton, Ohio; St. Mark's Mission House, Cincinnati, Ohio 304

The Very Reverend Henry Drees, Fourth Provincial, 1880-1898 .. 308

Facing page

St. Mark's Grade School, Cincinnati, Ohio; Precious Blood Grade School, Fort Wayne, Indiana 320

Present Motherhouse of the Sisters of the Precious Blood, Salem Heights, Dayton, Ohio 342

Chapel of Perpetual Exposition, Salem Heights, Dayton, Ohio . . . 348

Mother Mary Agreda, 1924-1936 350

Regina High School, Norwood, Ohio; Little Flower Academy, San Luis Rey, California 360

Maria-Joseph Home for the Aged, Dayton, Ohio 362

Reliquary of Mother Maria Anna Brunner, Salem Heights, Dayton, Ohio 376

Mother Maria Anna Brunner (Portrait by C. Bosseron Chambers) . 378

Mother Mary Magna, 1936- 392

Insignia Sororum Congregationis Pretiosissimi Sanguinis (1834-1944) 412

PART ONE

FOUNDATION

(1764-1844)

Chapter I

A PIOUS MOTHER

"I DO not regret leaving anything in this world; I wish only that before my death I could have assisted in causing the Sacred Heart and the Precious Blood of Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament to be specially honored by perpetual adoration in a number of places. For this cause I would have given not only my last farthing but also the last drop of my blood. If, however, I shall find mercy before God, I hope to contribute toward this good work even in eternity."[1] The words of the dying mother were slow and halting. Her life's strength was fast ebbing away, even though the ardor of her spirit remained unabated.

Outside, all nature was held in the throes of an Alpine winter. It was mid-January of 1836. The cold, bleak atmosphere spoke of death and decay and withered hopes, while the mountains, clad in white and peacefully silhouetted against the rosy dawn, seemed to give promise of eternal rest and never-ending day.

Inside, the winter of life was settling with full rigor upon the aged mother. His snow was upon her head and his chill breath upon her withered frame; but the glow on her countenance and the sparkle in her eye seemed to defy his advance, as she spoke of the devotion that had become the "be all and end all" of her existence. The great work which she had inspired only a few short years before was still a feeble beginning. It must go on, however, after her death, and please God it would. She felt assured of that. The manner in which Providence would carry out His designs regarding her small congregation was hidden behind the veil of the future, but she trusted Him.

That the dying wish of Mother Brunner was to be fully realized and her childlike confidence richly rewarded, the following pages will attempt to explain.

* * * *

The Alps are a constant source of wonder to travelers from all parts of the world. To the pleasure-loving tourist they may be, first and foremost, "the playground of Europe." But to a more thoughtful person they represent much more. Their lofty peaks, piercing the deep blue of the Alpine skies and capped with perpetual snows, tend to elevate heart and soul high above mundane interests to the contemplation of Divinity Itself.

Such spiritual exaltation was experienced by Hilaire Belloc when from the top of the Weissenstein he gazed out over a panorama of rugged beauty. "Let me put it thus," he writes,

> that from the height of the Weissenstein I saw, as it were, my religion. I mean humility, the fear of death, the terror of height and of distance, the glory of God, the infinite potentiality of reception whence springs that divine thirst of the soul; my aspiration also towards completion, and confidence in the dual destiny. For I know that we laughers have a gross cousinship with the most high, and it is this contrast and perpetual quarrel which feeds a spring of merriment in the soul of a sane man.
>
> Since I could now see such a wonder and it could work such things in my mind, therefore, some day I should be a part of it. That is what I felt.[2]

To the native Swiss the Alps are forever singing their *Sursum corda.* The commingling of gayety and religious earnestness in the Swiss character may be traced to the influence of these "magnificent creatures of God." In his lowly mountain hut the humblest peasant feels their spell and shares in the peculiar grandeur, the solemnity, and withal, the exhilaration, that only the Alps can afford.

View of Muemliswil, Canton Solothurn, Switzerland

Not far from the towering Weissenstein, which serves as an entrance to Canton Solothurn, is the village of Muemliswil, "a little paradise nestling among giant mountains."[3] To the north rises the range of the Passwang and to the south that of the Sonnenberg, both parts of the famous Jura range. The village itself is formed by the widening of a valley which stretches upward to a hill called the Hohen Winde. From here one has a comprehensive view of the surrounding country with its variegated scenery: encircling mountains, their rugged tops forming an irregular line along the azure of the sky; rocky passes cut through the mountains to give entrance to the village proper; wooded areas and green open spaces; and in the heart of the valley the homes of friendly Muemliswil and her twin sister, Ramiswil. Among the foothills to the west lies Reckenkien, a small upland hamlet consisting of little more than a few straggling farmhouses and shepherd huts.[4] There on October 1, 1764, was born to Adam Probst and his wife, Elizabeth Fueg Probst, a daughter whom they were soon to recognize as a child of benediction. The next day, the feast of the Guardian Angels, she was baptized Maria Anna Veronica.[5]

Herr Probst, a linen weaver by trade, was an exemplary husband and father, but a man of slender means. Through his industry he barely managed to hold his small parcel of land and to feed and clothe the members of his family. Although unable to afford them wealth and luxury, he bestowed on them something far more precious — a rich and generous nature. His kind and congenial disposition was recalled years later with deep affection by his eldest daughter. Frau Probst, on the contrary, although a devout Christian housewife well known for her charity to the poor, was inclined to be severe in the rearing of her children. As a consequence their love for her was not unmingled with fear.[6]

The first child to gladden the humble mountain home was a boy, Joseph, who was three years old when Maria Anna was born. From all accounts he must have been a gallant lad; he became the soldier of the family. When he reached the age of twenty he was sent by his father, whose pride and joy he was, to a military academy. According to parish and civil registers he later became an able lieutenant in Gablia.[7]

The events of Maria Anna's early life must be gleaned from her own reminiscences which have been preserved by her priestly son in his book, *Die letzten Augenblicke, die hinterlassenen Lehren und das selige Hinscheiden einer frommen Mutter* (*The Last Moments, the Bequeathed Teachings, and the Blessed Death of a Pious Mother*). It is chiefly upon this little biography that we must depend for our present account.

Her training began at home, where she learned from her efficient mother the useful household arts which every Swiss girl of her age and condition was expected to know. Cooking and churning, sewing and weaving, attending to the tidiness of the house and to her little brother (a second son, Jacob, had meanwhile been added to the family circle in 1768), left scant leisure for the sports that amused other mountain children. Whatever formal training she had, she must have acquired at the village school before she was twelve, for at that age she was already shouldering responsibility by helping her father provide for the needs of his growing family. Anxious though her parents were that their eldest daughter continue her schooling, Maria Anna, with an insight and a spirit of sacrifice beyond her years, volunteered instead to go to work so that her brothers might be given the opportunity of a good education.[8] Besides, another daughter, Elizabeth (1772), and a third son, John (1776), meant more mouths to be fed and a further drain of her father's meager resources.[9]

Childhood days were now definitely over for Maria Anna, and a new epoch in her life was beginning. Her skill with the needle and her ability as a housekeeper stood her in good stead. For a short time she was apprenticed to a seamstress, but later she went into the service of a prosperous landowner, Nicholas Brunner of Beibelberg, near the village of Ramiswil. Her competence at housework, her modest reserve, and her other sterling qualities of mind and heart commended themselves so much to her employer that she was accepted as one of the family circle. Indeed, after the marriage of the two daughters, the whole management of the Brunner household devolved upon the little servant girl.[10]

The spiritual life of Maria Anna kept steady pace with her physical growth. She had early caught the spell of the mountains, and they were always a challenge to her earnest soul to mount the high, steep ways that lead to God. From her devout parents she had imbibed the spirit of piety, and they ever strove to lead her on to noble living. On her deathbed she could exclaim with deep gratitude: "My parents, especially my father, were pious, and directed me in the path of goodness. Moreover, they did all in their power to have me well instructed."[11] Nor were their efforts in vain. A more dutiful and conscientious servant would have been hard to find. She sedulously avoided in dress and speech whatever savored of worldliness, and was intent solely upon the arduous tasks that her position imposed upon her. Not only early in the morning, but late at night she was often found hard at work, answering the thousand demands made upon her time and strength by members of the Brunner household. She did not dream of placing piety before duty, yet her heart longed for leisure to receive the sacraments more frequently and to give more thought to her Creator. In her declining years she bemoaned the fact that at this period of her life, while she served her earthly master so faithfully, she had been able to devote so little time to the direct service of God.[12]

When she was sixteen years old a momentous event in her young life gave a new impetus to her spiritual growth. The Jesuit Fathers gave a mission in her home town, Muemliswil, and she made every sacrifice to attend. Her eager soul drank in the words of the missionaries, and the seeds of piety that had early been implanted by her good parents blossomed forth and in due time produced fruits of real virtue. That mission made a lasting impression. Years afterward in training her children she would often enforce a command by the assertion:

"The missionaries said so; therefore it must be done."[13] On her deathbed she affirmed that she dated her conversion to a more spiritual life from that mission.

In her twenties Maria Anna must have been comely in appearance. The eldest son of the Brunners, John Baptist, wooed and finally won her as his bride, but it is more likely that it was her sterling qualities of character rather than her physical beauty that attracted him. He himself seems to have been pious, since before their engagement he made a pilgrimage to Rome to obtain light to know his vocation and grace to enter upon it with becoming gravity. Maria Anna, on her part, sought counsel from her confessor and the blessing of her parents upon the important step she was about to take. The marriage ceremony was celebrated at the parish church in Muemliswil on November 23, 1793.

John Baptist Brunner had bought part of the Beibelberg estate and thither he took his bride to establish a home of their own.[14] The house is still standing where the new Frau Brunner was the loving wife to her husband, the kindly mistress to her servants, and eventually the dutiful mother to her six children.[15] It is one of those large Swiss farmhouses with many doors, sloping roofs, and overhanging eaves, which are built of the best timber and destined to last for generations. In the large living room, where all the important work of the family was done, there was probably a hospitable tile stove which radiated warmth and comfort and stood as a symbol of home with all its sweet associations of love and devotion. Whatever the details of the architecture or furnishings, in the eyes of Frau Brunner her home was a sanctuary where it would be her sacred and bounden duty to rear her children in the love and service of God.

The first few years of their married life were turbulent times in Europe. The storm of the Revolution had broken with all its fury over hapless France. On the very day of their wedding the Reign of Terror was at its height. While not in the direct path of the destructive forces that had been let loose in the adjoining country, Switzerland was shaken to its foundations, and the cry of "liberty and equality" went up from every Swiss city and mountain hamlet.[16] At the birth of their eldest son, however, on January 10, 1795, the fury of the storm had all but spent itself; the first faint glimmerings of temporary peace were seen on the distant horizon. Like a messenger from heaven, therefore, came this little child into a world that was confounding liberty with license and had too frequently forfeited the true liberty of the children of God. It would be the blessed mission of this sturdy son of the soil to restore to many of his countrymen the birthright of which they had been robbed by the inroads of godless movements which were doing so much harm to the Church.

Baptized on the day of his birth, the boy was named Nicholas Joseph — the first name no doubt a tribute of esteem and gratitude to his paternal grandfather, whom his mother ever regarded with deepest respect. Little did that mother dream as she pressed a kiss upon her son's forehead, still fresh with the cleansing waters of baptism, that his destiny would be so closely bound up with her own. Her only prayer was that he would be good rather than great. Not many years hence that same little boy would be planning a career of his own as he tended the cattle on the mountainside; he would be dreaming of a life of solitude in some mountain cave, where like the hermits of old he could give himself up entirely to works of prayer and penance. But the designs of Providence were far different.

The eldest girl, Maria Anna, died before she was two, and the third child, also a girl, was named Anna Maria after her mother and her dead sister. Two boys, Joseph John Baptist and Urs Joseph, came next in order. This obvious predilection for the name Joseph, which was given to each of the three sons, testifies to the great and lifelong devotion of their parents to the humble carpenter of Nazareth. God's special favor rested on the youngest child, Maria Anna Frances, who was born on March 11, 1808. Like her mother, she was of a very cheerful and lovable disposition, which was to be a great asset to her in years to come.[17]

Realizing that she could not begin too early the training of her children, Mother Brunner endeavored to foster in them from their tenderest years sentiments of true piety and a love of prayer. To this end she taught them the daily family prayers soon after their first lisping attempts at speech. As they grew older, she encouraged them to master certain forms of prayer — even the Way of the Cross — by offering them small rewards.[18] Daily prayers in common were a matter of course, and woe to the child who said them with negligence or unbecoming posture. A condign punishment was sure to follow — usually the repeating of the same prayers with outstretched arms.[19]

There were other little practices of devotion to which this good mother habituated her children: the raising of their hearts and minds to their heavenly Mother thrice each day as with bowed heads they greeted her with the *Angelus;*[20] the whispering of a short prayer at the striking of the clock — a custom which she had gleaned from the Jesuit mission and had kept up all through the ensuing years;[21] the daily recitation of an Our Father for light to know and grace to follow their vocation; a daily memento for their pastor and confessor.[22]

If there was anything Mother Brunner insisted on, in season and out, it was love and esteem for the priesthood. "The more you honor the priests, obey them, and pray for them," she would often say in endeavoring to drive this lesson home, "the more you will participate in their prayers and Holy Masses."[23] She herself was a shining example in this regard. The visit of the pastor or of some other clergyman to her home was an occasion of the greatest joy, and his reception was not unlike that accorded some great dignitary. Nor was it so much the benefits which she received at their hands that called forth such profound respect; rather was it the dignity and sanctity of their office. They were "other Christs." Should she not, therefore, treat them as she would Christ Himself were He a guest in her house? Because of this hospitality, priests were frequent callers at her home, where they always found her the gracious hostess. At such times she would find pleasure in presenting her children for their priestly blessing and for examination in questions of the catechism.[24] No wonder that she was blessed with two vocations to the priesthood in her own family!

Along with the spirit of prayerfulness, Mamma Brunner early inculcated in her little ones the habit of industry. Love of work is characteristic of the Swiss, and the Brunner family was no exception. Wise mother that she was, however, she was careful not to overburden the younger ones. "Small tasks for small folk" was her maxim, but everybody worked. And there were enough jobs to go around in that household, even though it could boast of several servants. Modern conveniences were unheard of, and the immediate needs of the family as regards warmth, clothing, and food were largely supplied on the land and in the home. Hence, for the boys, there was the firewood to be carried and neatly piled in the woodshed or under the overhanging eaves of the house; there was the water to be fetched from sparkling mountain stream or from village fountain; there were the cattle to be led to pasture and home again for milking. The girls were kept busy with kneading and churning, knitting and spinning. No drones in that beehive. Mother Brunner saw to that.

At least on one day of the week, however, all but the most necessary activity ceased, and the Sabbath stillness settled down upon the mountain home. Frau Brunner, with calm insistence, would allow no work or amusement on Sunday that seemed to infringe in the least upon the rights of the Creator to their whole-souled service. All work that could possibly be anticipated was done on Saturday, even to the laying out of the Sunday clothes. The parents did not usually attend the same Mass, so that at no time were the children left without vigilant care. Mother Brunner would accordingly set out for the long walk to church alone or accompanied by one of her children. As they made their way along mountain path or, in winter, through pathless snow, they would pray the rosary so as to lose no single precious moment of the Lord's day.

But with all her strict observance she was never puritanic in her regulations. On Sunday afternoon after family prayers had been said and the head of the family had finished reading from some spiritual book, the servants were given time for rest or recreation while the children enjoyed themselves in quiet play near the house, but always under the watchful eye of their mother as she sat reading or praying.[25] Thus passed the golden Sunday hours in quiet, peaceful worship of God — hours that brought down in return richest blessings upon the family that remembered "to keep holy the Sabbath day."

To be sure, the Brunner children were not always on their best behavior, nor did their sensible mother, who had a rather keen insight into human nature, expect them to be converted suddenly into angels. Not that she failed to notice their faults or to call them to task; but she was ever patient, ever forgiving, ever pointing out positive means of improvement. She would pray with them that they might obtain the grace to recognize and overcome their failings before bad habits should be formed, and would impose small penances to prevent relapses. If at times she deemed it necessary to punish more severely, she carefully refrained from doing so in the first heat of anger, but waited as long as two or three days before applying the rod.[26]

In the matter of educating her children, Mother Brunner co-operated fully with her husband. John Baptist Brunner was a very pious and upright man, full of zeal for the honor of God and for the spiritual welfare of his neighbor. But he was of a rather pessimistic disposition. Youth especially, with its fashions, fun, and folly, was the subject of his endless lamentations and dark forebodings. The crack of doom was certainly not far distant with so much frivolity displayed on all sides. At such times his wife would ingeniously oppose to his dejection her own optimism and cheerful hopefulness, by which means she generally succeeded in restoring his good humor. "I just can't explain it," he would say to her then. "You are so different from other people. You know conditions as well as I do, yet you can always see the bright side of everything."[27] This overserious outlook on life inclined him to be rather severe in dealing with his own children, but fortunately their mother was always at hand "to temper the wind to the shorn lamb." If he threatened to inflict punishment on them for some misdeed, she would say nothing in their presence but would plead for them in secret. Then she would encourage them to beg their father's forgiveness and to promise to do better. This little strategy usually had the desired effect, for while upholding the authority of the head of the house, she at the same time protected her little ones from their father's wrath and too great strength.[28]

The light and warmth of Frau Brunner's boundless charity radiated far beyond the confines of her own home. Its beneficent rays filtered into the cold, forlorn hut of many a poverty-stricken family, bringing comfort and succor when they were most needed. With good reason was she called "Mother," not only by her own devoted six, but by the people of the neighborhood.[29] She literally mothered all the children of the poor for miles around. Scarcely ever did she go on a journey without returning penniless, yet always rich in the happiness and satisfaction that come from having gone about doing good. Sometimes (many hundred times according to her son's assertion) the poor would be seen coming up the mountain, twenty strong, with sacks and jugs to carry home bread, milk, and other substantial foods which their kind benefactress would provide. Often, too, she distributed articles of clothing, and each year made complete new outfits for a number of children whom she regularly befriended. Moreover, she was sponsor in Baptism for as many as twenty babies, each of whom was thereafter the object of her special attention and solicitude. To these she was a "fairy godmother," generously bestowing upon them gifts of money and of kind, together with more precious nuggets of gold — her wise admonitions and counsels.[30]

At times her charity seemed to go beyond all bounds; then her children felt obliged to remonstrate with her. Once a poor man from the village (a regular beggar at her door) intimated that it would redound to the greater glory of God and to her own increase in merit if she would leave all the cream on the milk or, still better, if she would give him only cream. When her children cried out against the insolence and selfishness of the mendicant, she was ready with his defense: " 'Tis true, the poor fellow is speaking in his own interest; yet what he says is true and contains a lesson for us if only we understood rightly. Wouldn't it rather be shamelessness on our part if we should constantly offer God the meaner portion of food and keep the choice morsels for ourselves? Again, how would you like to go around asking for alms as this poor beggar is obliged to do?" This incident proves without further comment that Mother Brunner possessed in a marked degree the real spirit of charity. It was because she feared her beloved poor might receive only castoff clothes and leavings that she chose to dispense her alms with her own hands.[31] A valiant woman indeed! "She hath opened her hand to the needy, and stretched out her hands to the poor."[32]

Closely allied with this openhanded generosity was her devotion to the souls in purgatory. Here again she was unstinting in her efforts to bring relief to those whom she considered the poorest of the poor. To this end she joined confraternities, endeavored to gain all indulgences possible, had Masses said for their repose, and encouraged her children to save their pennies for the same purpose. At each baking this kind *Nothelferin* (helper in need) put aside a loaf of bread — *Almosenbrod* (almsbread) — which was to serve the double purpose of feeding a hungry body and relieving a poor soul: the recipient was charged with hearing a Holy Mass or saying other prayers for the souls of the faithful departed.[33] Such charity is contagious. The children could not help but catch the spirit of their good mother. We have evidence to prove that at least her eldest son became a lasting friend of "those spirits, who prayed for others' prayers to hasten on their state of blessedness."[34]

If Mother Brunner had any weakness, it was her love for going on "outings" — not picnicking, to be sure, to mountainside or lakeshore, but pilgrimaging to the beautiful shrines of grace for which Switzerland is famous. These pious journeys were oases of refreshment in her spiritual life. Whenever a weighty decision was to be made or an important work to be undertaken, she would betake herself to one of her beloved shrines — Maria Stein, Einsiedeln (her favorite), or even faraway Weingarten — and there pour out her soul in praise and supplication.

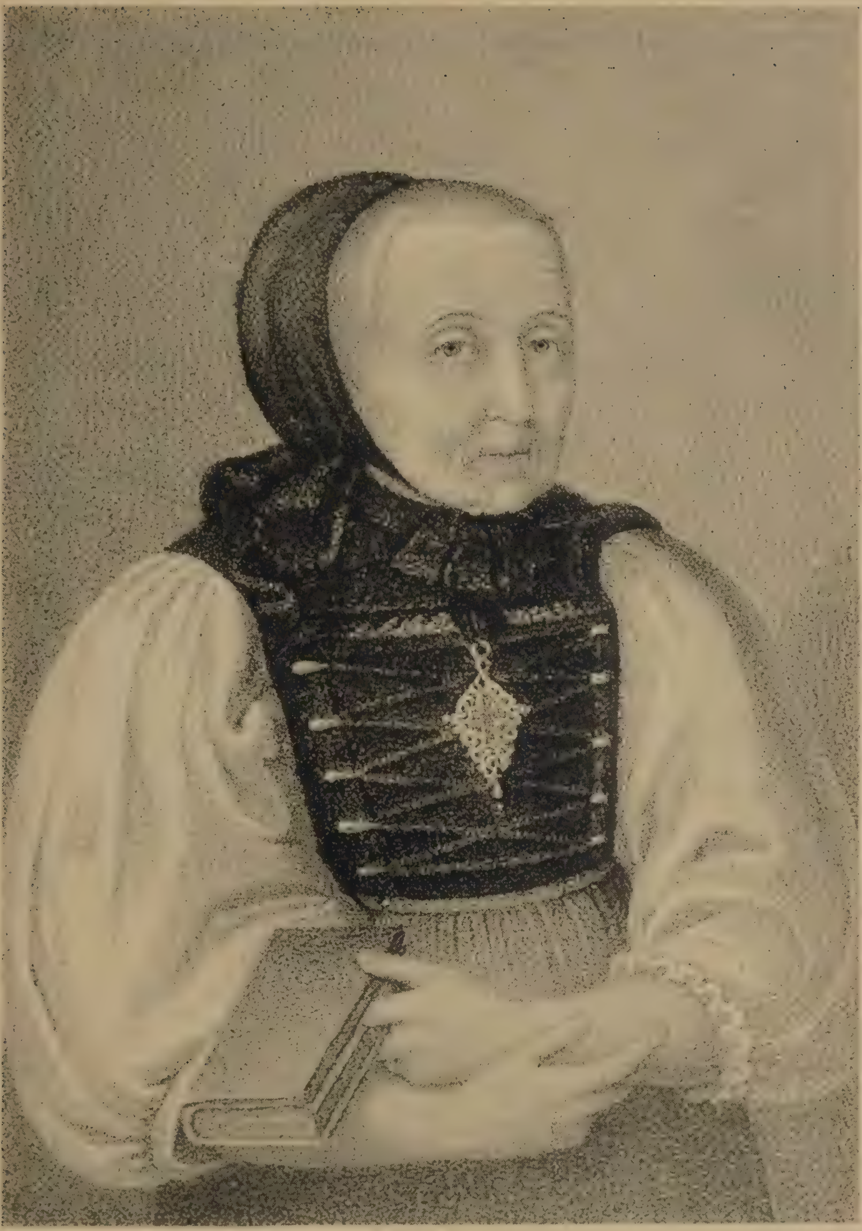
These pilgrimages were usually very fatiguing, for she made at least part of the way on foot in order to combine penance with devotion. Nor would this conscientious housewife permit these pious wanderings to obtrude upon her duties at home. Neither husband nor children suffered the least neglect because of her absence. While she visited more distant shrines only once or twice a year, many a Saturday morning in summer would see her before daybreak on the road to nearby Meltingen, where at the shrine of Mary (*Maria im Hag*) she would hear Holy Mass, confess and communicate, pray the rosary, and be back again before noon to finish her Saturday work besides making the necessary preparations for Sunday.[35]

One of these shrines — that of the Precious Blood at Weingarten — deserves special mention here. It was undoubtedly through her visits to this holy place that Mother Brunner received the first impulse toward that devotion which she ever afterward cultivated so assiduously and which became remarkable in her life long before the Archconfraternity of the Precious Blood was erected.[36]

The shrine itself is situated at Weingarten, near Ravensburg in Wuertemberg. The old abbey with which it was formerly connected has a long and interesting history. As far back as 900 it was founded for Benedictine nuns of Altdorf by Henry Guelph. A century and a half later it passed into the hands of Benedictine monks, but shortly afterward was completely destroyed by fire. Thereupon Guelph III ceded to the monks his own castle, built on a hill near by, to be used as an abbey. From that time it has been known as Weingarten. The abbey was suppressed in 1802, but the abbey church, which had been rebuilt (1715-1734), became the parish church of the town.

Here is preserved a relic of the Precious Blood, the greatest treasure in the church. There is an interesting legend connected with it. When Longinus opened the Savior's side on Calvary, he caught some of the Precious Blood in a leaden box, which he buried in Mantua. In 804, it was discovered by a miracle and solemnly exalted by Pope Leo III. During the Hungarian and Norman invasions it was again buried for safekeeping, but rediscovered in 1048. This time it was exalted by Leo IX in the presence of the Emperor Henry III, and divided into three parts: one part went to the Pope, the second to the emperor, and the third was left at Mantua. Henry bequeathed his portion to Count Baldwin of Flanders, who in turn gave it to his daughter Juditha. It was after her marriage to Guelph IV of Bavaria that it was finally presented to Weingarten, where it is now preserved in a reliquary of gilded copper, a cheap imitation of the former one. This original reliquary, made of solid gold set with precious jewels and valued at 70,000 florins, was confiscated by the government at the suppression of the abbey.

In memory of this solemn presentation, which took place on the Friday after the Ascension in 1090, a procession popularly known as the *Blutritt* was held every year until 1812, when it was prohibited by authorities.[37] Hence if Mother Brunner was ever present for this special occasion it must have been before that date, for it was not until 1849 that the custom was revived. That she did make pilgrimages to the shrine, however, is certain. It was here that she procured leaflets of prayers to the Precious Blood and holy pictures representing the seven effusions. The flame of devotion thus enkindled grew in ardor and intensity as time went on; her one desire was to dedicate



MARIA ANNA BRUNNER: *The Pious Mother*

herself wholly and entirely to the spreading of this devotion among others.[38]

Her love and veneration of the Mother of God was no less fervent. Was not Mary the source of the Precious Blood, and was it not through her that all the graces merited by this saving stream were poured out upon men? The name of Mary was Mother Brunner's also, and she had bestowed it upon each of her three little girls. Mary's shrines were her summer resorts; Mary's confraternities, the only clubs to which she belonged; Mary's feasts, her "red letter" days; Mary's rosary, her jewelry; Mary's scapular, her armor of defense; Mary's medal, her badge of honor. Everywhere and in everything Mary, Help of Christians, was her mother and her model throughout life.[39]

Spent thus in prayer and labor, the years sped by happily and serenely for the Brunners. The peace and harmony of their secluded mountain home, where news of the outer world was comparatively inaccessible, contrasted strongly with the disturbances and unrest that followed in the wake of the revolutionary movement which was then sweeping over Europe. History was in the making at their very door. It was the famous "era of Napoleon," during which an empire had been built up; before the turn of a decade (1804-1814) that same empire, founded on the ruins of the short-lived French Republic, was already tottering to its fall. Even in quiet little Switzerland momentous changes had already taken place. The old Swiss Confederation had been converted into the Helvetic Republic and forced into an alliance with Napoleonic France.[40]

Yet all these great political crises seem not to have affected to any marked degree the even tenor of the Brunner family's life. In the sources at our disposal no allusion is made to world affairs beyond the exhorting of the children to pray with greater fervor because the times were so evil. Not even the attack on Muemliswil by a detachment of French soldiers on March 1, 1798, is mentioned.[41] The parents seem to have discussed little the important news of the day. It was Mother Brunner's way to view the whole course of worldly events in the light of God's will and to leave all to the disposition of His providence. No amount of talking about them would avail. In her eyes the saving of a single soul was of far greater value than the conquest of the whole world;[42] hence her apparent unconcern about the external happenings of a period that would go on record as the most significant in modern world history.

At the beginning of the year 1812 all seemed well in the Brunner household. The children were growing up healthy of body and strong of character — thanks to the excellent care and wise training of their devoted parents. Nicholas was about seventeen and the baby, Frances, would be four in March. Spring came as usual with its ever-recurring miracle of the resurrection of life — a miracle all the more astounding in the Alpine region because of the amazing contrasts. In May the valleys burst forth into a "song of color," which rose with gradual crescendo to a full chorus in June. By July the spring sowings gave full promise of a bountiful harvest in September.

Then the blow fell. Herr Brunner, whose health had been failing for some time, finally succumbed to a malignant and painful disease. With a devotion that can hardly be paralleled, his wife stayed valiantly at his bedside during six long months, watching the slow martyrdom through which he was passing and doing all in her power to alleviate his sufferings.[43] Death mercifully brought release on January 14, 1813. No details of his final parting and burial are known, but the inscription on his tombstone attests to the high esteem in which he was held by his fellow parishioners:

Here awaiting a glorious resurrection,
repose the remains of
John Baptist Brunner,
who died on January 14, 1813
at the age of fifty-eight years.

The stay of his parish to the end,
Every noble virtue's friend —
A spouse and father without fame,

But God and duty were his aim.
Into the grave Death cast him down —
No, God called and will his merit crown.[44]

For Mother Brunner the strain had been too much. The many anxious hours she had spent nursing her sick husband, the loss of sleep, the sorrow at his passing — all combined to exhaust her strength so completely that she fell victim to a malady from which there was little hope of recovery. But He "Who has pity on the widow and orphan" spared her for her little ones, who so sorely needed a mother's care. Through the intercession of Mary, Help of Christians, as she herself asserted, a complete cure was effected.[45]

It was clear where her duty now lay. As soon as possible she must carry out the plans which she and her husband had made for the higher education of their growing sons, the eldest of whom had already signified his intention of becoming a priest.

Chapter II

A ZEALOUS MISSIONARY

ON JUNE 12, 1812, seven months before the death of her husband, Mother Brunner accompanied her oldest son Nicholas to the Benedictine Abbey of Maria Stein, where he entered as a novice of the Order.

The history of the famous shrine of Our Lady, *Maria im Stein,* reaches back far into the Middle Ages. About the thirteenth century — the exact date is not known — a miracle is said to have occurred on the very spot where the Benedictine abbey was built centuries later. A little boy, wandering from the watchful eye of his mother, a shepherdess, suddenly lost his footing at the edge of a precipice and was plunged 120 feet into the rocky cavern below. Later found unscathed, he ascribed his narrow escape from death to the power of Mary, declaring he had seen her and that she had expressed the wish to have a shrine erected in the cavern where he had fallen; his miraculous deliverance was to be taken as the sign. The first written document that records the miracle and the subsequent history of the shrine, dates back to the Council of Basle, 1442. *Maria im Stein,* as the chapel was popularly called from the beginning, soon attracted numerous pilgrims whose confidence in Mary's power is said to have won for them extraordinary favors.[1] Two centuries later, 1636, the Benedictines of Beinwil Abbey were given charge of the shrine. In 1645, under the direction of the pious and learned Abbot Fintan Kiefer, an abbey arose above the wall of solid rock which, enclosing the shrine of grace, served as a strong foundation for the massive structure.[2]

In the course of time the abbey, located near the boundaries of Germany, France, and Switzerland, was more than once exposed to attack by marauding armies. In 1798, just fourteen years before Nicholas Brunner's entrance there, it had lain a heap of ruins. French troops, having crossed the border, had forced the monks to flee and had plundered the building. After its restoration in 1804, the Swiss monks were recalled from the German monasteries where they had sought refuge. On July 20 of the same year Father Placidus Ackermann was elected abbot. Not only did he restore monastic discipline and the solemn chanting of the Divine Office, but he also rebuilt the shrine of Mary of the Rock and established a school for boys.[3] Mother Brunner made many devout pilgrimages to this shrine, which is only a short distance from Muemliswil, and sent her three sons to the school. And now Nicholas, who had studied there since 1809,[4] was returning to the abbey to become a Benedictine monk.

One can easily surmise the reasons for this step. In the first place, he was naturally gifted with a keen mind, ready speech, and an indomitable will. As a small boy he had shown an inclination to piety. The church was his favorite spot, and serving at the altar his chief delight. His sensible bearing and reverent demeanor soon attracted the attention of the officiating priests, and he was in great demand as a server. Then his truly Christian home was a nursery for such a vocation. There the example of his devout parents had a telling influence; there the Benedictine motto *Ora et labora* was observed as well as in the monastery itself; there the priesthood was held in the highest esteem. Above all, his vocation must have come as an answer to the ceaseless prayers of his pious mother. "There is no doubt," says his biographer, "that she was largely responsible for the qualities that we admire in Father Brunner, and just as we cannot think of St. Augustine apart from his holy mother, Monica, so we cannot separate the image of this good mother from that of her son."[5]

On entering the novitiate, the young aspirant received the name Francis de Sales, to which he asked to have the name of Mary prefixed. This request was significant of his deep devotion to the Mother of God, which was to become eventually a distinguishing mark of this knight-errant of hers.

With a determination that would brook no half measures the young novice at once applied himself to his studies. He advanced so rapidly in the arts and sciences that the prior himself, the learned Father (afterward Abbot) Boniface Pfluger, undertook to direct the education of this precocious student. Recognizing in his protégé certain qualities of mind and heart, the prior directed his attention toward a missionary career. Henceforth the zeal of Frater Francis de Sales knew no bounds. To prepare himself for this great work he endeavored to master French as well as Latin, an accomplishment that he realized would make him a more ready instrument in the hands of God for saving souls.

After a year's novitiate he was admitted to solemn profession of vows on June 13, 1813. With even greater earnestness than he had displayed in his studies, he devoted himself to the *Opus Dei* and to the attainment of religious perfection. In ascetical matters he gave himself over entirely to the direction of Prior Boniface. The energetic will of the young recruit needed just such a strong guiding hand to hold it in leash, for it was ever inclined to jump the barriers of custom and common sense. Francis accepted the wise teachings of his spiritual father with all his heart. To show his appreciation, he later collected them and published them in a book entitled, *Heilsame Errinerungen oder geistliche Zusprueche und Raethe des Hochw. Klosterpriors und nachmaligen Abtes Bonifaz Pfluger* (*Salutary Reminiscences, or Spiritual Exhortations and Admonitions of the Very Reverend Prior and Subsequent Abbot Boniface Pfluger*).

Three years after his entrance at Maria Stein, Frater Francis began a spiritual diary which he kept almost without intermission until 1823. Untoward conditions in the monastery, small happenings of his daily life, private conferences with his director, and details of his own spiritual combat are recorded with patient fidelity in seven bulky tomes written in his close, neat handwriting. At times the innermost workings of his soul are laid bare with startling frankness, giving the reader an insight into his character that would be impossible to gain from any other source.[6]

One of the greatest struggles of his early religious life was caused by the strong natural affection he felt for his mother and other members of his family. His mother especially, in whose heart he knew he held first place as eldest son, was often in his thoughts, and the urge to go home to protect her, to relieve her of work and worry, to be to her all that his father had been, was at times almost overwhelming.[7] Often, too, he found himself planning for the proper education of his youngest brother and sister, Joseph and Frances. As a matter of fact, when Joseph came to Maria Stein at the age of twelve to continue his schooling, he was placed under the tutorship of his older brother, Frater Francis. For the next five years the instructor found ample opportunity for exercising patience with that same little brother whose education had been the cause of so much concern before.[8]

Another source of anxiety during his student days was what he termed his "insatiable desire for knowledge," which he knew could not be slaked at Maria Stein. Sometimes he was disturbed by the temptation to go elsewhere but he rejected the thought as springing from pride and vainglory. "It is better," he would tell himself again and again, "to be an humble rustic than a proud philosopher."[9] When the time came to begin the study of theology, he was more than ever harassed with doubts about the true motives that impelled him to become a priest. He feared the dignity of the priesthood, the responsibility of a professorship — as contrasted with the weakness of his own perverse nature. But his superiors, disregarding his fears, directed him to prepare for Holy Orders.[10]

In September, 1818, he made the trip with a fellow seminarian to Offenburg, Alsace, where on the seventeenth of the month he was raised to the sub-diaconate by Prince-Bishop Neven of Basle, an eccentric old man of seventy years. Two days later he was made deacon. Even after that momentous step, his old fears returned at times to plague him, but when he began the retreat to prepare for his ordination the following March, all worries vanished to give place to a deep peace and a longing desire to immolate himself entirely on the altar of sacrifice. On March 6, 1819, he was ordained at Offenburg, and two weeks later on March 19, he said his first Holy Mass in the abbey church of Maria Stein. Of this event he wrote in his journal that evening: "My mother, brothers, and sisters consider it the greatest happiness in the world that I am a priest. Oh, that some day in the hereafter with father we should meet and embrace each other with greater joy than here this evening, when I feel, God be praised, somewhat indifferent and undisturbed concerning my family."[11]

Father Brunner's exemplary life and deep sense of responsibility soon won for him important positions in the community. The month following his ordination he was appointed professor of the younger students. In the winter of 1820, on returning to the abbey after a two months' stay in Mervelier, where he had gone to perfect his knowledge of French, he was made professor of moral theology in the seminary. As early as 1821 he became secretary of the chapter, which office he held up to the very day of his departure in 1829. During the first four years of his priesthood he devoted his spare time to pastoral duties, a work for which he had a special inclination and aptitude. In 1825 he was appointed master of novices.[12]

Despite these pressing duties, which must have occupied most of his time, Father Brunner was restless. He was burning with desire to give himself entirely to a more direct conquest of souls. The old yearning for the missions which had first been awakened by Prior Boniface Pfluger left him no peace. Accordingly, he set out on missionary tours in the neighboring territories of Alsace and Jura, where he labored successfully. During the year 1825-26 he made Gruenenwald (Parish Friesen, Canton Hersingen, Upper Alsace) the center of his missionary activity. The small bedroom that he occupied at this time in the parish house is still pointed out. From this center he went, at least on one occasion, as far as Delle, France, to preach.

In his *Reminiscences,* Abbot Charles Borromeo Motchi[13] gives a vivid picture of Father Brunner as a Benedictine missionary. He prefaces his remarks with the assertion: "Father Salesius Brunner has long been held by me personally in the highest esteem."[14] Then follow the reasons for his attitude toward the "missionary Father from Maria Stein," whom he had probably never seen. He had first become acquainted with the name of Father Brunner when as a small boy of ten or eleven years he had discovered the missionary's book, *Die geheimnissvolle Hand,*[15] in his father's library and tried to read it. But a far greater impression was made on him by the words of his stepmother, Elizabeth Kamber of Hagendorf, who spoke of Father Brunner with the deepest reverence. He had given a mission in her parish some years before. She had noted his fiery zeal as he preached the word of God; his sincere humility as he went about in his rough wooden shoes; his remarkable devotion as he entered the church, made a deep genuflection — not a half-and-half one as so many others were accustomed to make — and remained kneeling in fervent prayer for some time instead of rushing into the sacristy at once. "This same stepmother," continues the abbot, "was grateful to me, as only a mother can be grateful, and became for the rest of her life even more devoted to Father Brunner because I wrote down for her one of his sermons which she had heard with tears in her eyes at the Mission."[16]

At first Father Brunner seems to have engaged in these missionary labors with the full approval of his superiors. Father Jerome Ziegler and Father Carl Schmid, who had been ordained with him, were his assistants for a while, and he was thereby encouraged to broaden the field of his activity. However, when his absences from the community became more frequent and prolonged, complaints began to creep in. Pressing duties were awaiting him at home. A novice master could ill afford to be absent from his post for any length of time. Besides, his attention was divided; the novices and students were suffering from his neglect.

The climax was reached when his younger brother, Joseph Brunner, who had meanwhile entered the novitiate and was under his charge, left the Order. Father Francis de Sales felt that he was responsible. Filled with remorse for his over-zealous attention to outside interests, he wrote in the chapter book:

> In the last chapter, September 25, 1826, the Very Reverend Abbot Placidus had to put up with some disagreeable situations on the part of the cleric Domiano Gyr and the lay brother Urs Joseph Altermatt on account of the imprudence and capricious improbity of the novice master [Father Francis de Sales] who was absent at the time, and whose brother [Joseph Brunner, later a Jesuit] had left the novitiate.[17]

Realizing that his life as a Benedictine was not measuring up fully to the ideals of the religious life that he had set for himself, Father Francis probed his soul to the depths to discover the source of his malady. His inordinate attachment to works of zeal on the missions and his lack of mortification, he concluded, were the chief causes of his failure. He determined, therefore, to make no compromise but to cut himself free from all attachment to distinction, ease, and self-will by using drastic measures. The only effectual remedy would be to enter the stricter Order of Trappists.

To Prior Boniface, who had been for the most part his director for seventeen years, he first spoke of his intention. The prior put forth vigorously all the objections to such a step: man carries himself with him wherever he goes; temptations and self-deceptions become stronger in solitude; such an extraordinary step is usually fraught with dangers, and once taken is hard to retrace, etc. But he would give no decision because the affair touched too closely the eternal welfare of a soul. It was up to Father Brunner to decide.[18]

Abbot Placidus, on being consulted, took a more decisive stand: "Speaking before God and as your superior, I say to you that I consider your preference for a stricter Order to one that is favored by the whole Church, a delusion of Satan. . . . I as your superior am opposed to it and will never acquiesce." He then pointed to the opportunities that Maria Stein offered for a higher perfection even than that which could be attained in the Trappist Order if one would only live up to the ideals of St. Benedict. No, he could never concur in such an eccentric idea, which was plainly a deception of the devil.[19]

Despite these objections Father Brunner remained steadfast in his purpose, gratefully accepting all humiliations and rebukes meted out to him.[20] But he was not rash in making his final decision. With characteristic thoroughness he first subjected himself to a strict self-examination before God, carefully scrutinizing every motive and every inclination of his heart: "Why do you intend to leave? . . . Have your superiors or brethren offended you in any way? . . . Could you not do penance here just as well? . . . Why do you wish to go to the Trappists? . . . Will, then, all those here [at Maria Stein] be lost? . . . But do you not take yourself along with you? . . . "[21] With self-effacing humility he wrote in detail the answers to each of these questions, concluding that "Only for the glory of the Most High and as penance for my sins do I have recourse to a change in my state, a privilege that the Catholic Church grants to everyone."[22] He blamed no one but himself — his sins, inordinate attachments, bad example, contact with the world, his cowardice in neglecting to grasp the knife of mortification. For his superiors and brethren he had only words of kindness and charity. This famous manuscript "leaves no doubt as to the reasons which induced him to become a Trappist and remains as a splendid proof of the humility that Father Salesius practiced to such a remarkable degree."[23]

On July 19, 1829, he submitted this self-revealing manuscript to Abbot Placidus and finally induced his superior to permit him to enter the Trappist Monastery of Mount Olivet (Oelenberg) in Upper Alsace. But the abbot still did not favor the step. Further light is thrown on his attitude and the circumstances attendant on the whole affair by a very candid letter which he later wrote to Father Brunner, December 26, 1837:

> Let us consider your first move — namely, your leaving Maria Stein for Oelenberg. You, carried away as you were by an inner impulse toward the missions, but not without reproach of conscience that you were indulging this desire against the will of your superiors; then taught by your own experience that even the holiest works are connected with dangers; finally, struck with the idea that there was no salvation to be found in Maria Stein: you formed the eccentric resolution to sever yourself from everything with one stroke by casting yourself into that house of penance and solitude, Oelenberg. The titular abbot there, blinded and deluded by temporal interests, inasmuch as he believed to have found in you a gold mine, confirmed you in this extravagant resolve, partly through his personal solicitations and partly through those of his emissaries, etc., etc. A feeling of vexation still arises in me each time I think of this sorry affair. Had the abbot sent you back under obedience to your former superiors, who had been appointed fathers over you, had he earnestly enjoined upon you to aid by your example and words (which you had ample opportunity and authority to express) in placing Maria Stein, which was falling into physical and moral ruin, on its feet again and making of it a haven of salvation, affairs would have taken a more consolatory turn both for him and for you. In this case, where there was delusion on both sides, Maria Stein could only lament: *"Filios enutrivi, ipsi autem contemnentes spreverunt me"* ["I have brought up sons, but they scorning me have rejected me"].[24]

This summing up of the whole situation was a strong indictment of Father Brunner's conduct, all the more stinging since it came from his trusted friend and adviser, Abbot Placidus. Yet Father Brunner was sincere in his conviction that he was following the lead of grace and that his salvation depended upon his taking the step. A statement which he wrote years later in his journal while visiting Maria Stein confirms this conviction: "On July 21 I went by train from Freiburg over Basle to the shrine of grace, Maria Stein, which I left this very date in 1829 to go to the Trappists at Oelenberg in order, as I believed, to assure my salvation by joining a stricter Order."[25]

As in his Benedictine days Father Brunner the Trappist distinguished himself by his strict observance of the Rule and his spirit of mortification. Although he had already spent ten years in the ministry and was honored and revered both within and without the monastery, he submitted as humbly as the youngest lay brother to the penances imposed on him. The ascetic soul of Father Brunner reveled in the privations, hardships, and trials, both interior and exterior, that were his lot as a Trappist. At last he had found in solitude, he thought, that peace for which he had always yearned.[26] His soul, flooded with consolation, poured forth its sentiments in a little book entitled *Suesse Abendstunden oder Neun Naechte auf dem Oelberg* (*Sweet Evening Hours* or *Nine Nights on Mount Olivet*).

But the spiritual joy and sweetness which he had first experienced at Oelenberg vanished before the year was out and with it the peace of mind which he had sought. A self-styled "born brooder," he was forever analyzing his own state of soul, deploring his shortcomings, and meditating new means of reform. These he felt in duty bound to apply not only to himself but to the clergy in general, whom he considered woefully lax. A new idea gradually took shape in his mind and eventually possessed him to such an extent that he burned with desire to communicate it to the one person who he thought would be sympathetic — Abbot Placidus at Maria Stein. Accordingly, in May, 1830, he tried to arrange a secret meeting with his former superior to confer with him about this certain project, which was leaving him no rest.[27]

At first vaguely, and then more explicitly, his letters to the abbot outline his plan to found a monastery for penitent priests.[28] He urges Placidus to leave Maria Stein and join him in this important work. He intimates that the coming storm (the July Revolution of 1830) may be the occasion of his own forced departure from Oelenberg, an event that would be auspicious for carrying out his project. He avers that he has received the inspiration from God to settle, with several confreres still in their first fervor, at St. Peter's Chapel near Father Bernardine Juif's convent at Grossluetzel, and expresses the conviction that God will send him to do this work either through obedience to lawful authority or by some other disposition of His providence.[29]

While this secret correspondence was going on, Father Brunner continued his Trappist life as usual. Abbot Peter of Oelenberg expressed himself as well satisfied with this priest-novice and admitted him to profession. On July 27 Father Brunner made his vow of obedience in the chapter; two days later it was solemnized in the church. As a professed Trappist monk, he gave vent to his happiness in the words of the Psalmist: "*Misericordias Domini in aeternum cantabo.*" "*Deus fecit illud et est mirabile in oculis.*"[30]

His stay at the Trappist abbey was short-lived. As he had predicted, the July Revolution of 1830, which broke out in France, caused the monks of Oelenberg to be dispersed; on September 8, all except the French members were driven across the border. With several companions Father Brunner returned to Switzerland, an exile in his own country. But his peace of mind was unperturbed. "Through the infinite goodness of God," he wrote to Placidus, "everything is turning out so strangely that I am often very much astounded; but in all He gives me an inexpressible confidence. May God be praised a thousand times for the innumerable benefits He has bestowed upon me."[31]

His expulsion from the monastery, which he refers to as "an event I have always surmised,"[32] seemed to him an indication that God had other designs in his regard that time and circumstance would at length unfold. But he could not be sure. The next few months he spent in a blind groping to ascertain the will of God. There were several paths open to him, but he was at a loss which to choose. In the hard school of experience he was beginning to learn discretion; he would, therefore, proceed charily lest by some ill-advised move he thwart the designs of Providence over him.

His first effort was to keep together the several monks who were exiled with him and to continue to live with them in community life. He encountered serious difficulty in finding suitable quarters for the winter. For several days they were obliged to take lodging in a tavern. Soon afterward, however, he obtained permission to rent the Ettingen Baths in Basle, where he hoped "to harbor the whole community of brethren."[33] A month later he was still endeavoring to establish monastic life *à la Trappe* in Switzerland: "In Schwyz we did not buy the old nunnery, but we rented a large farmhouse for twenty-seven florins, where we could accommodate about twenty confreres."[34]

Meanwhile, his former yearning for missionary activity had seized him again. There was a renewal of the old struggle between his leaning toward the contemplative life under the shelter of monastic walls, which he realized was safer, and his desire for an active life on the missions, which he considered more glorious. This time his gaze was directed toward distant America. With surprising aplomb he presented himself before the papal nuncio in Lucerne and deliberated with him about the advisability of setting out for America with a small colony as soon as possible.[35] He would take with him only novices desiring to become Benedictines and to devote themselves entirely to the missions. There was question as to whether they would adopt the Benedictine Rule in its strict form or adapt it to conditions as they would find them in their new field of labor.[36]

Several circumstances caused this change in his plans. The Trappists exiled with him had soon separated to follow their individual careers, since there was no hope of gaining a foothold in Switzerland. He had various difficulties with Abbot Peter. He was advised by Placidus against returning to Maria Stein. His projects, one after the other, failed. Everything pointed in the direction of a missionary vocation, which he finally accepted as God's will.

By the following spring he was completely absorbed by the idea of going to America and dedicating himself wholly to the missions. In a letter to Abbot Placidus, whom he still regarded as his spiritual father and with whom he kept up a continuous correspondence, he gave full utterance to this desire:

> Most Reverend and Most Beloved Father in Christ:
>
> On this, the feast of St. Fridolin, the twelfth anniversary of my ordination, I am answering in a few words the very dear letter of your Most Reverend Paternity. In the first place, I give heartfelt thanks to God for the innumerable and great benefits I have received from you, inasmuch as it is you who gave me birth in Jesus Christ.
>
> The more numerous the obstacles that daily oppose themselves to prevent and recall me from going to North America, the more my heart is inflamed with desire to enter this region, which seems to me a land of promise, and to kiss its soil. Even though I have no doubt that many great tribulations await me there, yet I trust that I can do all things in Him Who strengtheneth me. Treasures other than poverty, contempt, and hardship I do not seek. There to preach the holy Gospel of Christ and to observe it by a life according to the letter and the spirit of the Rule of St. Benedict, is the only thing that I desire.
>
> I cannot express the ardent longing of my heart to save souls redeemed by the Blood of Christ. I desire nothing temporal; whatever is necessary for me and my brethren

for a moderate sustenance, our hands will supply. I am ambitious for no other privileges nor exceptions than that I may wholly surrender and subject myself and mine through filial obedience to those whom the Holy Ghost has appointed to rule the Church of God.

Long ago I embraced in the heart of Christ all the American bishops, priests, and faithful, and in all my prayers I have implored the blessings of God upon them. I look upon all the wretched and poor there as my beloved lambs, and as often as possible by day and by night I pray for them.

Please write, therefore, to the bishops of America and ask them in the name of Jesus to condescend to admit me, a good-for-nothing, and meanwhile to remember me daily in their prayers. It is not money but prayer that I need, for it is almost incredible how much the enemy is plotting to deter me from this resolution, which I could not in anywise carry out except through the very singular and special protection of the Mother of God.

The hour is now at hand when, if I be permitted, I shall with the greatest joy seek those regions to be of some help and consolation to the very precious souls redeemed by Christ's Blood, although in doing so I must leave behind everything — most of all, you yourself, my most beloved Father in Christ.

In order that this great work may not be marred by my own will, I would earnestly implore that the Holy Father himself expressly send me and enjoin this obedience upon me unconditionally, especially since my actual superior [the Abbot of Oelenberg] endeavors to dissuade me from this purpose and continually burdens my conscience. It does not seem at all out of the question that the American bishops themselves may condescend to write about this affair to the Holy Father.

As for the rest, I desire to recommend myself to the prayers of you and yours, and with the utmost reverence, devotion, and affection, I remain, wholly,

Your most humble servant in Christ. . . .[37]

With this letter he enclosed the following recommendation, which he had received from the Bishop of Solothurn.

> To the reader salutation and blessing in the Lord!
>
> That the Reverend Father Mary Francis de Sales Brunner, a Catholic priest, not only has always lived conformably to his priestly state, but has also, by his remarkable religious zeal as well as by the purity of his doctrine and the probity of his character, proved himself most worthy of all praise and commendation, we do hereby testify by affixing to these present writings our signature and episcopal seal.[38]

In answer to Father Brunner's plea, Abbot Placidus took upon himself to write to Bishop Fenwick of Cincinnati, recommending his client to the American prelate and asking that a mission field be opened to him in the United States. In this letter the abbot is unstinting in his praise of his former subject, whom he designates as "a most religious man . . . adorned to a remarkable degree with all the virtues befitting the Christian and monastic state as well as the priesthood."[39]

At this time Father Brunner was staying at the monastery at Dub, where he found himself so "inexpressibly happy" that he wondered how he could be wishing and praying himself away from there. Yet he was restless. His immediate plan was to go to Canton Grisons to do what good he could until he should receive a commission for America.[40] But the way to Grisons was not open to him until word came from Rome, and Rome was slow as usual. Impatient at the delay, he set out to visit the vice-prefect of the missions, residing near Chur. He was cordially received by the Capuchins, who were in charge of the missions of the canton, but found in their soft living and worldly spirit grave cause for censure and need of reformation.

A passionate zeal to reform the clergy from the Pope down surged anew in the ardent soul of the missionary. He began to devise plans to bring before the eyes of the Holy Father in a graphic way the duties of his office as chief shepherd. He would engage an artist to paint a picture representing the bark of Peter in danger of being shipwrecked because of the remissness of the pilot and his crew. Or he would prevail upon Abbot Placidus, as having more influence than himself, to write a letter addressed directly to Gregory XVI, setting before him in vivid language the growing evils within the Church and urging the necessity of retreats and missions to bring priests and people alike to repentance and renewal of spirit before all would be lost. This awakening of pastors to a sense of duty was, Father Brunner thought, his peculiar vocation, more important even than the call to the missions in Grisons and America.[41] But his plans, as before, turned out to be mere chimeras. Desiring to help but finding his efforts unavailing, he could fall back only on prayer.

In Chur he was invited to teach in the seminary. He did not relish the idea; he preferred to be independent, to be on his own, and to give missions to the people. Fearing that the bishop might write to Rome and ask for his appointment, he felt that he must declare himself definitely against the proposal. Besides, the vice-prefect was bent on having him come to Tomils to prepare himself for a missionary career, and there he would remain.

Finding himself seriously handicapped by his ignorance of the prevailing language, he determined to master the intricacies of Romansh quickly at any cost. In preference to living in the parish house with the Capuchins and their servants, he went all alone to a desolate crypt, a charnel house lined with human skulls and bones which, according to Swiss custom, had been dug up to make room for new burials. Supplied with a copy of the Scriptures, a Goffine, and a catechism, all in Romansh, he spent six weeks in these gruesome surroundings, studying the strange tongue that he would need in his work, and fasting, praying, meditating.[42]

At the end of this period of preparation he traveled the length and breadth of the canton, conducting retreats, giving missions, reviving in the people wherever he went the true

Catholic spirit. He gained a reputation not only as a zealous missionary but even as a saint.[43] Everywhere he was greeted in the popular language as *Pader Sogn* ("Saintly Father"), or *Pader Ner* ("Black Father") in contrast to the brown-robed Capuchins.[44] Even a miracle was attributed to him: the restoring of life to an infant long enough for it to be baptized. A painting which still hangs in the sanctuary of the ancient shrine of the Mother of Sorrows at Seewis commemorates this event, and a Latin statement in testimony of it can be found among the musty leaves of the parish death register.[45]

Father Brunner's evident sincerity founded on the whole-souled consecration of his own life to the service of God was the secret of his success in dealing with individual souls as well as with groups. He easily won the hearts of the people. Moreover, he was a gifted preacher. He knew the art of impressing his hearers by the mere tone of his voice and of inculcating an important lesson by the use of homely expressions that made a peculiar appeal to these simple peasant folk. Above all, his words carried with them an irresistible force, which was backed up by his own efforts to achieve personal holiness.[46]

In October 1830 a call came from America. It was good news. But there were many circumstances to weigh before he could answer the call.[47] In the designs of Providence the time was not yet ripe for this zealous missionary to realize his desire of spreading the Faith in a foreign country. He had still to wander through the dreary desert of uncertainty, misrepresentation, and failure before he was to be vouchsafed the joy of entering the promised land.

Chapter III

CASTLE LOEWENBERG

IN THE course of his missionary travels Father Brunner came upon an old castle romantically set on a mountain that rises above the little village of Schleuis in Canton Grisons (Graubuenden), Switzerland, and commands a wonderful view over the Rhine winding through the valley below. He at once perceived the possibility of converting this age-old bulwark into a training camp for the young recruits whom he hoped to enroll in a "foreign legion" for the cause of Christ.

The location of the castle in Grisons was in itself significant. The canton teems with historic interest reaching back even to the time of the Caesars, for it forms part of the old Roman province of Rhaetia and its original inhabitants are thought to have been Etruscans. The very name of the capital city, Chur — *Curia Rhaetorum* — testifies to its Roman origin. It was, in fact, a Roman fortified camp, where after a bitter struggle in 15 B. C. the bronze-armored and helmeted legionaries of Drusus and Tiberius, stepsons of Augustus Caesar, stood guard over the newly subdued Rhaetian tribe.[1] Indeed, Loewenberg itself, only sixteen miles to the west of Chur, may have at one time re-echoed with the tramp of mighty Roman legions.

The actual builders of Castle Loewenberg are unknown. They were probably of the tribe Lepontii, who inhabited the Lepontine Alps. As early as the twelfth century a noble family, the Loewenbergs, held it in possession. Whether because of its strong fortifications or on account of the influence of some powerful dynasty without, it never came under the dominion of the grasping Lords of Belmont — a fate that had befallen several neighboring castles.

When the Loewenberg family became extinct in the thirteenth century, the castle became the possession of the feudal Lords von Schluven or Schloewis, who built up the vassal village of Schleuis at the foot of the mountain as a means of sustenance as well as of defense. Their feudal sway was of short duration. In quick succession the castle passed into the hands of various noblemen[2] until in 1493 Aegidius von Mont Villa purchased the estate for the sum of 4,034 florins. From that time until Father Brunner took over the property, the Lords von Mont were the owners.

Two outstanding events in the history of Loewenberg castle under the von Monts are especially noteworthy.

In the last quarter of the seventeenth century Gallus III von Mont acquired the estate from a relative by purchase. This baron, a devout Catholic, erected the beautiful church of St. Mary at Sagens, a small town near by, as a monument of his devotion to the Mother of God. The church resembles a basilica in miniature, so imposing is the architecture with its stately towers, and so richly ornamented is the interior with its Barcelona gold-covered altars. Here he provided a crypt for the burial of the members of the von Mont family and of the Capuchin friars, whom he had invited to come from northern Italy to found a monastery in connection with the church.

The other incident was disastrous in its results. Under John Henry von Mont (1685) Loewenberg castle with all its priceless treasures was almost entirely destroyed. A fire originating in the village of Schleuis swept up the mountain and enveloped the old building with its devastating flames. The massive tower of the castle crumbled into ruins and had to be removed; from its stones a triple wall was built to enclose the terraced garden that surrounded the castle.

The last family of the nobility to inhabit Loewenberg was that of Peter Anthony von Mont. On the invitation of the bishop, however, they repaired to Fuerstenburg in Tyrol, where the baron and his son were created chief guardsmen of that ancient fortress.[3] Thus for thirty years Loewenberg castle was left abandoned, an abode only for owls and bats and ghosts of former lords, whom the simple-minded village folk firmly believed to haunt the place.

It was in this condition that Father Brunner discovered Loewenberg castle in the spring of 1832.[4] There it stood, gaunt and grey, a grim reminder of medieval glory and splendor. An arched entrance, graced by carved stone doorposts and guarded by a heavy iron gate, led into an oval-shaped court paved with flagstones. A great lantern hung from the center of the ceiling, where the massive rafters supporting the roof met. Opposite the entrance a stone balcony, reached by a stairway on either side, was built out from the first floor. Two other staircases led to a second-floor balcony running around the entire court and surrounded by an iron guardrail. Off the court on the ground floor were the kitchen, storerooms, and servant quarters. A door from the lower balcony opened on to the main floor with its large reception rooms and dining hall, where the lords and ladies were wont to entertain their guests. From an arched doorway on the upper balcony a hall led to the living quarters of the noble family. By means of an inner staircase they could ascend to the bed chambers on the third floor and to the towers.[5]

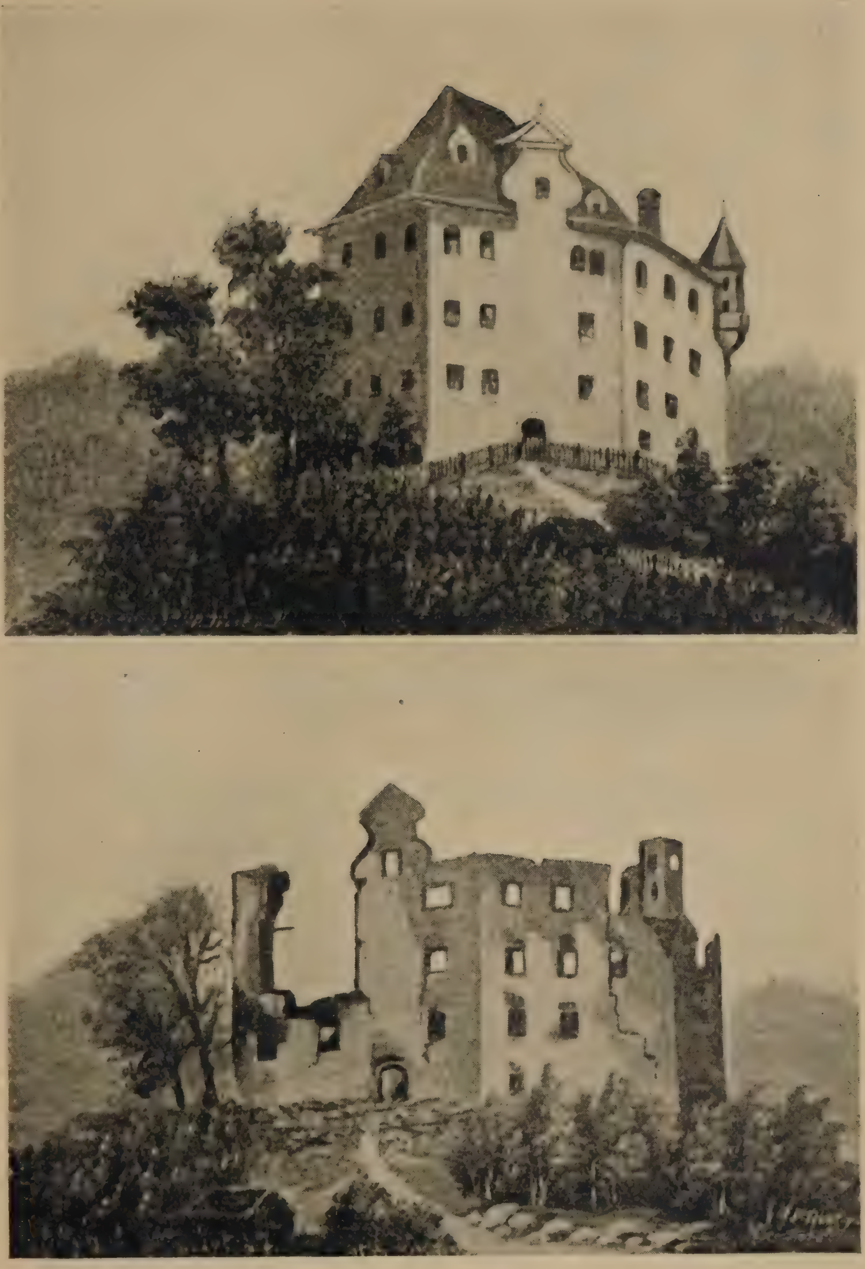
The whole arrangement of the building as well as its quiet and secluded location appealed to Father Brunner. With some renovations, he thought that it could be better adapted to the purpose he had in mind than the shrine of *Maria ad lucem,* near Trons, where he had at first intended to start a school and about which he had written to his old friend and counselor, Abbot Placidus: "Through the all-powerful intercession of the Mother of God I hope to begin here, near a beautiful shrine of the Mother of God, in accordance with our previous steadfast purpose and plan, a small Benedictine mission institute."[6]

At this time Father Brunner was still conducting missions in the Oberland under the direction of the Capuchins. The fruit of his labors was remarkable — so much so, in fact, that his very success became a stumbling block. Complaints were lodged against him by those members of the secular clergy and of the Capuchins themselves to whom the blameless conduct and self-sacrificing zeal of the ascetic "Trappist" were a constant reproach. He was accused of not following the Capuchin mode of life, of working too much and too indiscreetly, of carrying out the orders of the bishop only and not those of the prefect. Father Brunner answered the Propaganda, which had sent him this list of complaints, without exposing the evils on the missions. His only request was to be made an apostolic missionary dependent on Rome.

It may well be that this untoward state of affairs more than ever strengthened his resolution to begin as soon as possible to lay the foundation for a future missionary society. In pursuance of this resolve he opened negotiations with the owner of Castle Loewenberg, Baron Henry von Mont, a grandson of the last occupant of the place. From him he obtained a lease on the building and property for 200 florins a year.[7] In a letter from Tomils, dated March 4, 1832, he informed Abbot Placidus of this transaction, as he had promised to do, adding significantly:

> For this great and costly undertaking I have nothing — no, not a thing — except an unshaken trust in God and in the all-powerful intercession of the Virgin Mother of Grace; but that is enough, yea, more than enough. It is my one desire that this work prosper and I hope that through the grace of God much good will come of it. I have already endured much suffering and trial on its account. Satan sleeps not, but *ipsa conteret caput ejus* ["she shall crush his head"].[8]

Having obtained the building, Father Brunner lost no time in making definite plans for opening a boys' school at the spring term. In this he was aided by one of his spiritual sons, John Probst, whom he had converted to the Faith in 1827. This young man, having begun his teaching career under the celebrated Pestalozzi, was well acquainted with the latest develop-



Castle Loewenberg before and after the Fire of April 14, 1889

ments in educational theory and practice. The syllabus[9] that he and Father Brunner jointly drew up is both interesting and instructive. There is something surprisingly modern about its tone, and it reveals so well the high educational ideals by which Father Brunner was guided in his work among youth.

The new village school was immediately popular. Life was again astir in the old castle which had stood dormant so long and had been regarded with such fearful eye by the villagers. The lusty shouts of healthy schoolboys soon banished the owls and bats from their secure haunts and destroyed the last vestige of lingering ghost and goblin. Once more Loewenberg became the cynosure of all eyes and the chief topic at village gatherings. Old cronies recalled over their bumpers the "good old days," when their lords bountiful would invite them to merrymakings where there was no end to the flow of genuine Rhenish and real champagne. This revival of interest in the old place was the best advertisement for the school. By the first week of June, two months after its opening, the enrollment had increased to thirty-five.

Everything was now in full swing at the castle. God's blessing seemed to rest visibly on the project from the beginning. "In these few weeks," wrote Father Brunner to the Abbot of Maria Stein, "we have actually witnessed miracles." Needed repairs had been made throughout and the whole building was remodeled to serve the purpose of a school. On the ground floor were the kitchen and dining room. Students' quarters occupied the first or main floor, the chaplain's room and the study halls were on the second floor, while the servants' apartments were on the third floor near the chapel, which was in the observation tower. Part of the grounds surrounding the castle had been converted into a truck farm, where potatoes and other vegetables, rye, rice, Turkish corn, and millet were under cultivation. Milk, butter, and Swiss cheese were provided by three cows and six goats, which were left to graze on the rich pasture lands that sloped down toward the village.[10] With deep gratitude Father Brunner could exclaim: "Thou openest Thy hand and fillest with blessing every living creature" (Ps. CXLIV, 16).

It was indeed little short of a miracle that the zealous missionary was able to procure the funds necessary to launch such a colossal undertaking. Emboldened by his first stroke of success, he risked new ventures. By August he had obtained sufficient security to purchase "Castle Loewenberg with all the furniture, books, church supplies, etc., contained therein, together with the vegetable gardens, beginning with the so-called lower house on the road, as also the road itself extending from that house to the castle; moreover, the clearing in front of and alongside the castle, the claim to the so-called castle water, and one half of the woods in the so-called gully behind the village of Schleuis." The contract placed the total cost at 4,500 florins, 1,000 of which had to be paid immediately, 500 the following December, and the balance, 3,000 florins, within three years at four per cent interest.[11] This was no small deal for a penniless "Trappist" who professed poverty, and it is hard to reconcile his finances with his vow; yet his unlimited trust in the providence of God, coupled with an iron will to dispatch what he had so hastily begun, carried him through for the time being.

Despite opposition from civil authorities and clergy, the school prospered not only materially but spiritually and intellectually as well, a fact that we learn from another of Father Brunner's letters to his revered abbot: "The evident blessing of God is revealed in all our pupils. There are over thirty now. We give them religious instruction twice a day, perform our prayers, meditation, and other exercises in common with them, and are with them day and night. They find their greatest joy in prayer, in instruction, and in study, wherein most of them are diligent and earnest, not mechanical. They are now making the six Sundays of St. Aloysius. Oh, if we could educate several dozen or several hundred such boys as these for the missions."[12]

In September Father Brunner did not hesitate to invite the Chancellor of the diocese of Chur, Very Reverend J. J. Baal, to subject his pupils to an examination. At first the bishop as well as his chancellor had frowned upon the Loewenberg venture, seeing in the school a rival of St. Lucius Seminary in Chur. For that reason they had forbidden the teaching of Latin and had endeavored to keep Professor Probst in the seminary.[13] Later Monsignor Baal had shown himself a friend in need to Father Brunner by championing his cause against his accusers.[14] After this the bishop had taken a more conciliatory attitude toward the Loewenberg Institute and had even visited the place, promising his support and encouraging a permanent foundation.[15] Not only, therefore, was Father Brunner eager to satisfy the bishop as to the scholarly attainments of his pupils, but he also wished to continue to draw down the favor of the hierarchy upon a work which would eventually need its full approbation and co-operation. Hence this ingenious letter which he addressed to the reverend chancellor:

> Next Wednesday we shall conduct a little examination with our children before dismissing them on the feast of Mary's Nativity for a four-weeks' vacation. It would afford us inexpressible joy if you, in the name of His Grace, could be present, in order to give us some advice and direction for the future. If this should be impossible, perhaps His Grace would be willing to delegate someone else, the Reverend Vicar of Laags, or whomever he may please, to inspect the school and present a report of it. We should desire that our school be entirely in the hands of the hierarchy, and we as its instrument wish to be dependent upon it. Such is God's arrangement.
>
> After the feast of Mary's Nativity, I should like to canvass Switzerland in order to seek out, quietly and secretly, benefactors for our cause. I should be very glad if you would give me a word of recommendation to present to the Bishops of Solothurn and Freiburg, *ut oculis videant, quod ordinarius cum conatibus nostris sit contentus et schola nostra sit ad bonum commune* [that they may see with their own eyes that the bishop is satisfied with our efforts and that our school is for the common good].[16]

On October 15, the school reopened.[17] But by that time the Xaverian flame had burst forth anew in the heart of the missionary, and he was all on fire to go to Africa. The school was now but a secondary concern. He would leave that in the care of the pastor of Seewis under the bishop's protection. He himself would go to Rome to answer in person the charges that had been made against him and to procure proper testimonials. Then off to the wilds of Africa![18]

* * * *

During the years of Father Brunner's preparation for the priesthood and his earliest activities in the ministry, his mother was living a quiet, uneventful life at the old homestead near Muemliswil. There was no one to record the heroic deeds which she must have performed during those long, patient years. Like Mary of Nazareth, she lived a truly hidden life, unknown to anyone save the members of her own household and the recipients of her boundless charity. Her chief concerns were her own sanctification, the proper care and education of her children, and her charities.

But the children were all settled in life now. One by one they had left her to establish homes of their own or to dedicate themselves entirely to the service of God.

The second son, John Baptist, and the second daughter, Anna Maria, both chose to enter the married state. The latter married Urs Joseph Fluri. Only one of their children, Caroline, lived beyond childhood. Her great grandson, the Reverend Albin Ackerman, was ordained in 1933. John Baptist had attended the Benedictine school at Maria Stein as had his two brothers. Realizing that he was not called to a life in religion he withdrew, and as a sheep raiser and herder, became a man respected and loved in his community for his generosity to the poor and needy. He married Frances Roesch and their union was blessed with five children — two boys and three girls. The oldest daughter, Anna Maria, was named after her grandmother.

Isidore Matthias, the second son, became the forefather of a large progeny; and it was his eldest son, Matthias John, the father of fourteen, who came to America with several of the children in 1881, settling first in the New England States and later in southwestern Ohio, where their descendants live today.[19]

Joseph Brunner, Mother Brunner's youngest son, who had left the Benedictine novitiate in 1826, entered the Society of Jesus on October 8, 1830, at Estavayer, Switzerland, and was admitted to his final vows on February 2, 1841. Like his eldest brother Father Francis, he had rare administrative ability, which his superiors put to good use. He was appointed successively subminister, general prefect, and procurator of the College Novaora in Olleggia, Canton Schwyz. In 1847, when Swiss politics led to a suppression of all Jesuit activities in Switzerland, he was transferred to America, where for almost ten years he was active in New Orleans and on different missions in Wisconsin and Missouri. In the summer of 1857 he went with Father Basil Haefely, S. J., to Bombay, India. For twenty-seven years, until he rounded out his full fourscore, he was professor of moral theology and for some time (1871-1877) regent of the priests' seminary, St. Xavier's College, at this great mission center. He spent long hours in the confessional, where he displayed untiring zeal as a physician of souls. His long and fruitful ministry was closed on the feast of St. Stanislaus Kostka, November 13, 1884.[20] Though his saintly mother did not live to see him ordained to the priesthood, her influence went with him through life and helped to make of him an exemplary Jesuit.

Mother Brunner had the happiness of seeing her youngest daughter, Mary Frances, enter religion. Having finished her education at a boarding school conducted by the Nuns of the Visitation in Fribourg, Switzerland, she expressed a desire to join the Order. Her affable disposition and fine talents could not fail to impress her teachers, who gave her every encouragement to follow her vocation. She entered the Visitation Order about 1829 and three years later, in November, 1832, as Sister Mary Scholastica, she was professed a choir nun. Having fulfilled the duties of assistant infirmarian and then of sacristan, she was finally named assistant to the mistress of boarders. Her great affection for her charges caused her many a struggle, and she therefore asked to be sent to another monastery. In 1838 she went to Dietramszell and served subsequently in the foundations she herself made at Pielenhofen and Benerberg. A letter[21] which she wrote at this time in her beautiful even German script to her brother, Father Francis de Sales, gives proof of her deep spirituality. Returning to Dietramszell in 1846, she was sent, only three months later, to Thonon where, under the guidance of the venerated Mother Marie Alphonse, she became grounded in humility and began to advance rapidly toward the perfection of her state by the practice of conformity to the divine will. Recalled in 1852 to the monastery in Fribourg, she was placed at the head of the boarding school. By her kindness and tact she soon won the admiration and affection of parents and pupils, who voiced the opinion that they could possibly find a better school but never a better mistress. Since her return from Thonon, Sister Mary Scholastica had been failing in health. Her condition became acute in May, 1854, when she suffered an attack of gastric fever, which was soon followed by typhoid. Well fortified with the Last Sacraments of the Church she died two months later, on July 21, with the words on her lips, "I place all my trust in the merits of Jesus Christ."[22]

After Joseph's departure for the Jesuit novitiate in 1830, Mother Brunner disposed of her house and property. Beibelberg was no longer home to her since all of the children were gone; she therefore arranged to live with her married daughter, Anna Maria, who had invited her to come. Here she remained for two years.

Although all possible care and attention were lavished upon her during this time, the soul of Mother Brunner was restless. Her desire to live a wholly interior life was constantly thwarted by necessary contacts with the world and the social demands made upon her time. She determined, therefore, to sever all bonds and break entirely with the world, despite the earnest entreaties of her married son and daughter to remain with them.

Very touching was the scene of departure from her beloved *Heimat,* where her natural affections had struck deep root. With a courage born of a profounder love she bade a simple, tearless farewell. "I am going," she said, "to Mary at Einsiedeln, and there I hope through the intercession of the Mother of God to learn what I am to do." And to Einsiedeln she directed her steps pilgrimwise.[23]

The shrine itself, which like Maria Stein is connected with a large Benedictine church and abbey, is beautifully situated in an attractive village named after the shrine in Canton Schwyz. The story of the miraculous origin of this sanctuary "in the dark wood" is dear to every true Swiss heart. It goes back to the time of St. Meinrad, a Benedictine monk who was born about A. D. 797. While he was teaching at Zurich he was inspired to give up an active life and retire to the solitude of the forest on Mount Etzel. Thither he went with the permission of his superiors to lead the life of a hermit. Soon the rumor of his great sanctity reached the outside world, and people began to flock to the little oratory which he had built for himself. Loathe to be disturbed in his life of prayer, he moved farther into the "dark wood." Among the few books and other effects which he took with him was a statue of the Blessed Virgin which had been given him by Abbess Hildegarde, a daughter of King Ludwig. After twenty-five years of solitary life Meinrad was murdered in his cell by two robbers who were out for plunder. Two tame ravens belonging to the saint followed the criminals to Zurich and caused their capture and subsequent punishment. Out of the cell of St. Meinrad grew the celebrated shrine *Maria Einsiedeln* (Mary of the Hermits), where the statue bearing the title Our Lady of the Hermits is to this day the object of veneration.

In 948 the great church of the abbey built around the original oratory was to be solemnly consecrated by Bishop Conrad of Constance. On the eve of the consecration the bishop went at midnight to the church to pray. Suddenly he saw a bright light illuminating the place and heard the chanting of psalms as by a great choir. In front of the statue of Our Lady he beheld Christ Himself, assisted by the four Evangelists, offering the Holy Sacrifice. Angels and saints were in attendance. Then came the words of the solemn blessing of a church: "May the blessing of heaven rest upon you, and may the angels, may God Himself make His dwelling in you." Bishop Conrad, overcome by the celestial vision, remained in prayerful stupor until morning. When sought out and reminded by the monks that the hour set for the consecration was at hand, he refused to perform the ceremony, maintaining that the church was already divinely consecrated. Nevertheless, Abbot Eberhard ordered the ceremony to begin immediately. But when the procession reached the altar, a voice from heaven was distinctly heard by the entire assembly: *"Cessa, cessa, frater, capella divinitus consecrata est"* ("Cease, cease, brother, the chapel has been divinely consecrated"). Sixteen years later a papal bull of Leo VIII threatened with anathema anyone who would venture to reconsecrate the chapel. And no one ever did.[24]

So runs the strange story of lovely Einsiedeln — a story that must have captivated the devout soul of good Mother Brunner and made this spot especially sacred to her. It was here before the large, wooden, richly draped statue of the Virgin that she sought light and counsel to know what she was to do next. Here, too, on a crisp October morning in 1832 she recommended to the Mother of God her children, her native Switzerland, and all the dearest interests of her heart.[25]

From Einsiedeln she made the difficult pilgrimage to Citailg, where there is another shrine of Our Lady under the title of Mother of Mercy. The little church enclosing the shrine stands on a lonely, barren spot high on a mountain in Oberhalbstein, some twenty miles southwest of Loewenberg. The nearest village or human habitation is at least six miles distant. Even in summer there is scant vegetation there, since the mountain is snow-capped nearly the whole year around. In winter it is altogether inaccessible. There is, of course, no resident priest in the place, but it is tended by the Capuchins from Salux.

This shrine too has its interesting legend. Mary is said to have appeared to two shepherds where the church now stands. It has therefore always been the favorite resort of humble shepherd folk, who come from as far as Italy to pay their respects to the Mother of Mercy.[26]

Here our devout pilgrim, who was tireless in knocking at the portals of grace, renewed her resolution to quit the world and prepare in silence and recollection for her death. Sixty-eight winters had already passed over her head; she knew the end could not be far distant. Yet she felt that her life's work was not yet completed; God had something more for her to do. To know His will and to follow it — that was the burden of her ceaseless prayers, the reason for her weary wayfarings.

Mother Brunner was now on her way to Loewenberg, where she was anxiously awaited by her son. Since the preceding spring Father Brunner had lived in the hope that she would aid him in establishing a boarding school for girls similar in plan and purpose to the boys' school he had begun.[27] He was also depending upon her for some cash to help pay off the debt on the castle. But above all he was happy just to have his aged mother with him and to offer her a quiet, peaceful abode in the castle. She chose a room near the chapel so she would have ready access to the Blessed Sacrament.[28]

With the 1,500 florins received from his mother, whom he designates as an "outstanding benefactress of the institute," and with donations made by two other benefactors he was able to make the final payment on the castle before the date set by the contract for the second installment, and to start a fund of 5,000 florins. In the document containing the disposition of the property in favor of the Bishop of Chur, he stipulated that a home be provided for his mother as long as she would live, should she care to remain at the castle.[29]

He himself was still cherishing the hope of being sent to foreign mission fields. Not America now, but the African Congo was his goal. The Propaganda was calling for volunteers to that distant land. Father Brunner in his eagerness to do something was willing to abandon even his American project. He determined, therefore, to carry out his resolution to go in person to Rome, there to offer his services to the Propaganda.[30]

The next few weeks were spent in preparation for his contemplated trip to the Eternal City, whither his mother was to accompany him. Confident that he would be accepted for the Congo and that he would perhaps not return to Switzerland, he was careful to put all his affairs in order. December the eighth was the day set for their departure. By the sixth he had secured the passports and other necessary papers;[31] on the seventh he took an inventory of the goods of the castle[32] and wrote out in legal form a long document in which he explained his will regarding the disposition of the Loewenberg estate in favor of the Bishop of Chur. This manuscript, which is still extant, embodies Father Brunner's idea of a truly Christian institute and reveals the deep religious character of its author.[33]

At length the long-awaited morning dawned. It was Saturday, Mary's day, and the feast of her Immaculate Conception. Not by mere chance did these two faithful clients of Mary choose this day for beginning their journey. Under her protection they set out for Chur, where they stayed over Sunday,[34] and then continued their route Romeward by diligence and boat, both mother and son suspecting that momentous events were awaiting them at their journey's end.

Chapter IV

ROME, THE CENTER OF DEVOTION TO THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

MOTHER BRUNNER'S purpose in accompanying her son to Rome and her first impressions of the Eternal City are clearly set forth in a letter which she addressed to her children in Switzerland several months after her arrival:

> Do not be sad because I am so far away from you. I made this journey with the sole purpose of assuring myself of the hope of finding you all again some day in heaven. To do penance for my many sins, to prepare myself for a happy death, and to implore the necessary graces for you, my dear children, for the perilous pilgrimage of life that still lies before you, I first undertook the difficult pilgrimages to the prominent shrines of grace in Switzerland; then, despite my old age, relying upon the goodness of God, the far more difficult journey to Rome. God has sustained me in this undertaking in a most wonderful and visible manner. Forever praised be His infinite goodness inasmuch as He has deigned to grant this grace, besides so many others, to me, a poor, unworthy sinner. On Wednesday, December 19, in the shrine of Loreto, I had the consolation of receiving into my heart Him Who vouchsafed to spend the greater part of His earthly life in such a poor little house with Mary and Joseph. Two days later, on the eve of the feast of St. Thomas the Apostle, just as the sun was going down I gazed for the first time upon the Holy City and its magnificent church of the prince of the Apostles, where I have spent most of my time since; here at the tombs of the great apostles and martyrs I have found more consolations than ever before in my whole life. True, one finds in other places of the Christian world much that is beautiful, good,

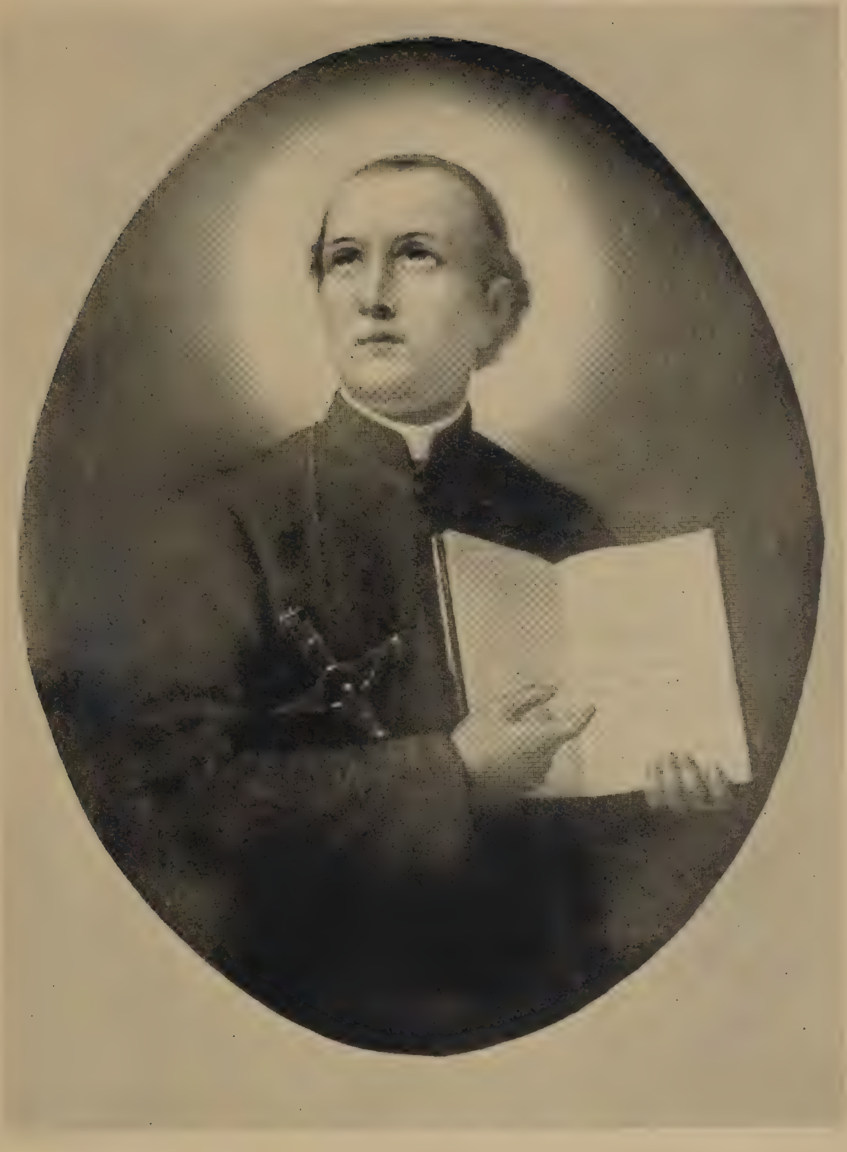
> and holy; but in Rome is centered everything that the human heart could possibly desire.[1]

At the time of Mother Brunner's sojourn in Rome, the Church had just emerged triumphant from a great conflict that had been waging for several decades. The struggle began with the French imperialistic movement which followed in the wake of the Revolution. Though it left Christ's Vicar bereft of a part of his temporal power, it renewed the face of Rome and Italy by effecting a complete spiritual regeneration. One of the immediate causes of this triumph of the Church over souls was devotion to the Precious Blood, which was officially introduced during this period.

On June 10, 1809, Napoleon wrested Rome and the Papal States from the hands of Pius VII and less than a month later whisked the aged Pontiff off into exile. Contrary to Bonaparte's expectations, the clergy and people remained loyal to the Holy Father. Many of them chose exile rather than allegiance to the emperor.

Among those whose loyalty to the Church and her Supreme Head was put to the test, was a young, energetic priest of only twenty-four years, who courageously answered the demand to take the oath of fidelity to Napoleon with the ringing retort: "I would rather die or suffer any evil than to take such an oath. I cannot, I will not, I must not."[2] The name of that fearless loyalist was Gaspar del Bufalo.

Born in Rome of humble parents on January 6, 1786, he received in Baptism the names of the Three Kings, Gaspar, Melchior, and Balthasar. In his earliest years he showed signs of saintliness, and this inclination toward piety grew with his growth. As a student at the Roman College he became a leader of what we should now term a youth movement, the purpose of which was to catechize, to preach, to "scout." Fired with a boundless zeal for souls and gifted with a rare oratorical ability which he displayed even as a youth, Gaspar was soon marked out by his superiors for an important career in the Church. But



Blessed Gaspar del Bufalo

the year of his ordination was saddened by the outrages heaped upon the head of Christ's Vicar by Napoleon and the sufferings that came to the Church in Italy as a consequence of the aggressiveness of the French emperor. To the weight of this sorrow were added personal trials: exile, illness, the loss of his "incomparable" mother, imprisonment. He bore all with angelic patience and beautiful resignation to the will of God.

In these difficulties his friend and support was saintly Father Francesco Albertini, the founder of the Pious Union of the Precious Blood. It was Albertini, his spiritual father and director, who first aroused in Gaspar an undying devotion to Christ's redeeming Blood. When Gaspar was expected to die in exile in Piacenza, Albertini, assuring him that he would live, revealed the prophecy of a holy nun concerning a young man (Albertini was convinced that it was del Bufalo) who was to "found a new congregation of missionary priests under the title of the Divine Blood," and who was to be known as the "Trumpet [*sic*] of the Precious Blood."[3] Albertini helped Gaspar make and carry out plans for the organization of the missionary society. Together they had tasted the bitterness of exile and together they launched the great work that was to effect such marvelous changes in the spiritual life of the people of Rome and her environs.

The story of the founding of the Community of the Precious Blood at St. Felix in Giano on the feast of the Assumption, 1815, and the untold good done by Gaspar and his zealous associates through their devotion to the lifegiving Blood of the Savior fills some of the most glorious pages in the history of modern Rome. Through the preaching of missions thousands were converted, among them "anticlericals, freemasons, apostates, atheists"; the spiritual life of the faithful was rejuvenated; banditry was suppressed.[4]

Perhaps the most far-reaching work of which Gaspar was co-founder was the Archconfraternity of the Precious Blood, today numbering millions of the faithful among its members. It was started, as was mentioned before, by Francesco Albertini as the Pious Union of the Precious Blood, in the church of San Nicola in Carcere, where he was then a canon. Through the combined efforts of Albertini and del Bufalo it was raised to the status of a confraternity by Pius VII on September 23, 1814, and three days later to an archconfraternity. By a papal brief, dated October 8, 1815, it was enriched with many indulgences.[5]

Here in San Nicola in Carcere Mother Brunner spent much of her time during her stay in Rome. The devotion to the Precious Blood, which she had long nurtured in her own heart, was inflamed anew by contact with such zealous promoters of the devotion as del Bufalo, Albertini, and one of their first associates, Vincent Pallotti.[6] It was the fervor and zeal of these holy priests that decided her vocation. She felt called to assist them in their arduous work for souls by continuous prayers to the Precious Blood and by spreading this devotion among her own countrymen. The prayers recited by the members of the archconfraternity, in which she had meanwhile been enrolled, impressed her so deeply that she asked her son to translate them into German. These she later introduced into the congregation she founded.[7]

While in Rome, Mother Brunner enjoyed the hospitality of a noble lady, Signora Sturni, who lived near St. Peter's. Proximity to the great basilica made it possible for our aged pilgrim to spend much of her time there, whither she felt herself drawn time and again. One day when she was deeply absorbed in prayer at the tomb of the Apostles, her mantle was stolen from her shoulders. She did not perceive her loss until she arose from her devotions and endeavored to fasten her cloak about her. On returning to her lodgings she remarked to her hostess good-naturedly: "But tell me, are there really such people even in holy Rome who would steal a mantle from a person's shoulders? The poor fellow who took it from me may have needed it badly enough, but at least he could have asked me for it."[8]

Another spot in Rome which was especially dear to her was the church of St. Lorenzo, where a nocturnal procession and devotions for the poor souls were held weekly. The procession would form on Monte Cavallo and thence proceed to St. Lorenzo, where prayers were recited and Holy Masses were offered for the faithful departed. In these she participated whenever possible, but never unaccompanied. On one occasion, after the procession had returned to the city at daybreak and the crowd was dispersing, Mother Brunner lost sight of her companion. As a result she was obliged to wander about the city fasting until late in the afternoon, when she finally found her quarters.

It would seem that this ardent lover of God and His Church wanted to crowd into the short space of nine months all the good works that her whole life long she had desired to perform but for which she had found little time and opportunity. Father Brunner, in summing up the pious activities of his saintly mother during this period, writes:

> . . . she spent most of her time on her knees before the altars, attended Holy Masses from early morning until noon, received daily the Bread which has come down from heaven, fasted, gave alms, visited the sick, sought out all the local shrines and holy places, joined pious associations and confraternities, and was tireless in the performance of all charitable and penitential works, in the gaining of indulgences, and in the participation in every good work, all to obtain the grace of a happy death.[9]

While she was thus engaged in her devotions, her son was carrying out the purpose that brought him to Rome. During the first week after their arrival he was granted two audiences with the Prefect of the Propaganda, Cardinal Pedizini. This prelate gave him every assurance of help for the Congo mission as well as for his institute at Loewenberg, which Father Brunner still planned to make a recruiting station for foreign missions.[10] Buoyed up with renewed hope of soon realizing the desires of his heart, he diligently applied himself to learning the African and Portuguese languages.[11] When not engaged in study or in business directly connected with his mission project, he found great consolation in accompanying his mother to the holy places of Rome. The one need of the hour, he realized, was prayer, and so he joined heart and soul in the pious supplications of her who knew so well how to pray.[12]

But two months passed without his receiving any definite commission. He was still awaiting associates for the Congo mission, which the Propaganda had promised to procure. The slow-moving methods of the Vatican were more than his ardent nature could endure. Toward the end of February he determined to go himself to Switzerland in order to seek out priests or seminarians who would be willing to throw in their lot with him.

Accordingly, on February 27 he left Rome, and traveling over Genoa, arrived in Kazzis, Canton Grisons, on March 13. He had brought with him two major relics, bodies of saints, but on account of difficulties with customs officers he had been obliged to leave them at Milan. One of these he intended to present to a poor convent in Kazzis; the other was to go to Maria Stein.[13] From Kazzis he went on to Loewenberg, where he remained only long enough to assure himself that all was well at the castle. Its only occupants were John Probst, the two maids, Elizabeth Meisen and Salome Wasmer, and a hired caretaker. Father Brunner's object in keeping these on was soon to be revealed.

Before the end of March he was in Olten, Canton Solothurn, and had already gathered about him a dozen young clerics destined for the Congo. The majority of these were from the seminary of Strassburg, but there were also among the number several Benedictines from Maria Stein whom Father Brunner had induced to join him.[14] This small mission band was to accompany him to Rome as soon as he had settled another important affair which he had much at heart.

Loewenberg in April is a delightful spot, but it was not the beauty of awakening spring that attracted him thither. He came back determined at once to reopen the boys' school, which had been prospering when he left in December. He still hoped that opposition to his project would die down and the mission institute would flourish. More and more did he realize the need of a preparatory school where the vocation of candidates could be tested and proper training given them. Unless such a center of missionary activity were maintained at home, efforts on foreign soil would prove futile.

Ten or fifteen students sought admission to the castle school that spring. As director, Father Brunner left in his own place one of the priests who had offered to join his mission corps. This was a Jesuit, Father Queloz, whom Father Brunner characterized as a "peace-loving, mortified, discreet, learned, and pious priest."[15] John Probst was still on hand to act as instructor.

Early in May Father Brunner was back in Genoa with his small company, making final preparations for the trip to Rome. But important business detained him and he sent most of his companions ahead. The reason for his tarrying at the seaport he disclosed in a letter to his friend, the Chancellor of Chur:

> I perceive more and more clearly that our missions will come to naught if we do not first band together in a society established according to the spirit of God and His Church, and make arrangements for training our own subjects for future times. Here in this city, which is especially dedicated and devoted to the Virgin Mother, we desire to make a start.[16]

Before a start could be made, however, Father Queloz suddenly appeared in Genoa with the disheartening news that the old serpent of opposition had again reared its head in Grisons. Venomous tongues were busy and the former tirade, prompted by envy and prejudice, was repeated. Father Brunner, resigned as usual, decided to return at once to Loewenberg to straighten out matters himself. "This journey," he wrote ahead to Monsignor Baal, "that I would not otherwise make for a whole handful of gold, I am now undertaking with joy for the sake of Graubuenden and out of love for Jesus. God will grant me help and counsel through the intercession of His Virgin Mother."[17]

On arriving at Loewenberg, he found his worst fears realized. Opposition to the school was daily increasing. The secular authorities, supported by a faction of liberal-minded Catholics, maintained that Father Brunner had no right to open an educational institution without their permission and that the proper place for the boys was in the cantonal school. From complaints they turned to threats. The menace grew to such proportions that finally toward the end of June he gave Professor Probst over to the seminary at Chur, where he had secured a position for him,[18] and soon afterward dismissed the boys for a fortnight at least. There was little hope of their returning, except for the seven poor ones whom he had received gratis. The Loewenberg project seemed doomed to failure.[19]

The next few weeks Father Brunner remained at the castle, daily expecting a call from Rome. But none came. Meanwhile he heard that Father Queloz had received a commission to go to China and was even then preparing for departure. Father Brunner determined to return to Rome at once and seek permission to join the Jesuit and the other missionaries whom he had sent ahead. Leaving a Father Leaz in charge at Loewenberg, he arrived in Genoa on August 2. Before embarking he again addressed a letter of thanks to Monsignor Baal, who had proved a constant friend and adviser to him in all his difficulties.[20]

New trials awaited him in the Holy City. He found his mother stricken with malaria. The sultry climate of Rome during the summer was more than she could stand. When he disclosed to her his intention of joining the missionaries who were to set out for China in a few days, she objected to his going. He had asked her what provision he should make for her future. "I have told St. Peter," she answered calmly, "not to let you go, and I firmly believe that he won't. But may God's holy

Will be done in all things! He will surely lead me wheresoever He wants me to be."[21]

And so it turned out. Although he had obtained leave from the Propaganda to join the mission band bound for China and had made all necessary preparations for the departure, he received a countermand at the last minute. How wonderfully the design of Providence over him was indicated in this new disappointment! The much-tried missionary could not comprehend at the time that it was, after all, not China but America, his first love, for which his Lord had destined him.

Several considerations had induced the Prefect of the Propaganda to make this revocation. In the first place, Father Brunner was really a sick man. Since 1827 he had been suffering from an open wound on his leg, which not only caused him great pain but at intervals confined him to his bed for days at a time. The wound would heal again, but there was always the possibility of its becoming malignant and making him permanently bedfast. Change of climate and the hardships inseparable from life in the missions would tend only to aggravate his condition.

Furthermore, there was dire need of a revival of religious fervor among all classes in his homeland. Father Brunner himself more than once deplored the general laxity even among the clergy. "It makes one's heart bleed" he had written to the chancellor in May, "when one must see on all sides how low the clergy have sunk nearly everywhere — even in monasteries."[22] The fact that some of the Benedictine monks at Maria Stein were unfortunately not living according to the spirit of the Gospel had been one deterrent to his returning there. Distressing indeed were the effects on shepherds and flock alike of Josephinism, liberalism, and other pernicious doctrines that had been sown by the French Revolution.

Cardinal Pedizini had learned, chiefly through his communications with the Bishop of Chur, that Father Brunner was the one man eminently fitted for the evangelization of Switzerland — and this, not only because of his linguistic ability, but above all because of his strict asceticism. Wherefore, after bestowing upon him the title of Apostolic Missionary by a decree dated September 11, 1833, the prefect ordered him to go back to Switzerland and engage in missionary work there under the direction of and in obedience to the respective bishops from whom he was to obtain the proper faculties.[23]

Thus another cherished plan was brought to nought. It must have been a severe blow even for as humble a man as Father Brunner. With his usual equanimity, however, he accepted it as the will of God and made ready to carry out the wishes of the Holy See.

His mother was still suffering from a lingering fever, but convinced that the healthful mountain air of her native country would be the very best restorative, she consented to return to Switzerland with him. After the feast of the Name of Mary, September 12, they set out. On the homeward journey Mother Brunner's condition became so critical that her son feared she would die on the way. But she would hear nothing of death. She felt sure that her time had not yet come. She dismissed his fears by saying, "St. Joseph will certainly bring us to the place that God has destined for us and will care for us on this journey."[24]

Neither mother nor son considered it a mere coincidence that they arrived safely at Razins, near Chur, on a Wednesday evening, and that the church there was dedicated to St. Joseph. From that hour the fever left her and she began to recover. Her life was preserved for greater things.

Chapter V

A FAR-REACHING WORK BEGUN AND A LIFE'S WORK ENDED

MOTHER BRUNNER returned to Loewenberg in September, 1833, intent on carrying out the inspiration received at San Nicola. To adore the Precious Blood, to make it known and loved, to obtain for God's Church zealous priests who would apply this saving stream to erring souls — this was her trinity of aims. Trinity, I say, for really they were three in one: *Laus et honor Sanguini Jesu!*[1]

She began by placing first things first — prayer before action, example before words. Her spirit of piety and her exemplary life attracted the two maids who were still at the castle and before long they were joining her in her vigils before the Blessed Sacrament, not only during the day but also at certain hours of the night. Both gladly threw in their lot with their aged mistress, and soon a great work was born. Elizabeth Meisen (afterward Sister Clara) from Grisons and Salome Wasmer (Sister Nothburga) from Alsace with Mother Brunner formed the nucleus of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Precious Blood.[2]

The winter months passed slowly and uneventfully. As yet no definite plans for extending the work begun in such an unassuming manner had taken shape in the thoughts of the good mother. Her humility would have been shocked had anyone even intimated that she was to be the foundress of a large and flourishing community.[3] Her only desire was to gather enough simple souls about her to keep up perpetual adoration before the Blessed Sacrament day and night.

Spring brought five or six new members from Alsace — friends, no doubt, of Salome Wasmer — and the number was now sufficiently large to keep vigil throughout the night before the Blessed Sacrament. Each guard made two hours of adoration. Mother Brunner was happy. No longer would her Lord be without worshipers during the long, still, nocturnal hours when men for whom He bled were buried in sin or sleep. He now had His faithful "guard of honor," who would keep watch with Him to the end of time if possible.

As the membership continued steadily to increase, it became necessary to maintain some kind of order. With the approval of the Bishop of Chur, Mother Brunner gradually introduced among her spiritual daughters a common rule of life. This was at first an unwritten law that grew out of the daily directions and admonitions of the saintly foundress. Fundamentally, it was the same as is observed in the Congregation today, although the first members did not at the time follow the evangelical counsels.[4]

They led a simple common life under the guidance of Father Francis de Sales, who had become their spiritual director. In August, 1835, he completed the first draft of a rule of life for the "poor Sisters," but it was evidently never printed. In the manuscript he dwelt at length on the chief aim of the pious union — reparation to the Sacred Heart in the Blessed Sacrament through prayer, labor, and penance — and sketched very briefly their mode of life.[5]

At an early hour they said morning prayers in common, in which devotions to the Precious Blood held a prominent place. Graces rained down abundantly on the small community at Holy Mass and at Communion, which some received daily even in that Jansenistic age. During the day there was work — hard work: domestic tasks inside the castle and outside labor in garden, woods, and field. Beautiful vestments for chapel were wrought by deft fingers, clothes were made for the community and for the needy. Whatever the task, it was hallowed by a spirit of recollection and prayer, the golden thread of religious silence running through all the busy hours. After dinner they prayed the Way of the Cross — Mother's favorite devotion; after supper came the rosary and Benediction of the Blessed

Sacrament. This was followed by the general examination of conscience and meditation. Then began the night vigils.

No habit peculiar to the institute was adopted during the lifetime of the foundress nor for some years afterward. The dress of the earliest members, modest in cut and black in color, differed little in style from the native Swiss garb.[6] After all, the habit is not an essential element of the religious life. But to clothe their souls with grace and virtue, to wash them in the Blood of the Lamb, to wrap their spirits in silence and obscurity — that was the concern of these humble pioneers!

For the second time in her life Frau Brunner became the mother of a family. And as before, she was again really a mother to her children — children adopted in the name of Christ's Blood. Here was the same firm but gentle hand that formerly had guided the first uncertain steps of her little ones. Now it was to guide these children of a larger growth — simple-hearted maidens, the majority of them unlettered — in the difficult ways of the spiritual life. They all admired, loved, and imitated her.

Admiration was first in order — admiration for her evident saintliness, her spirit of humility and mortification, her sweet patience. "During all this time," her son wrote, "she never uttered a single harsh word to her associates, nor did she display on any occasion the slightest indication of impatience in the midst of all kinds of hardships and contradictions."[7]

She easily won their love and confidence, for like an "angel of peace" she could by a mere glance of her cheerful countenance dispel clouds of doubt and discouragement and revive the fainting spirits of her companions.[8] Though entitled to every mark of respect and service because of her age and position, she was rather the servant of all. Indeed, her love of humility was so great that she appointed one of her companions to act as superioress in her stead. To this Sister (probably Sister Clara Meisen) she made known her desires and plans, often sought her advice, and obeyed her with the humble submissiveness of an ordinary Sister.[9] With maternal solicitude she watched over the needs of her growing religious family. When resources were low and funds failed, she had recourse to St. Joseph. Invariably she received help to carry on.

Loewenberg soon became a second Beibelberg. The poor of the neighborhood found in her a kind benefactress, and the castle forthwith became for them a house of refuge. Almost from the beginning she provided for the training and support of a number of little girls, mostly orphans, whom she kept at the castle. Here they were taught by one of her more educated companions to read, write, sew, and pray. Thus was established on a small scale the first orphanage of the Congregation.[10] It indicated a type of activity in which Mother Brunner wished her daughters to engage. In reality it was but a flowering of the original aim: to give praise and honor to the Precious Blood of the Savior by making it fruitful in souls.

Whatever could be spared from supplying the needs of her Sisters and her beloved poor went toward beautifying the castle chapel. In May, 1833, a few months before his mother came to reside at Loewenberg, Father Brunner had obtained permission to offer Holy Mass in the chapel.[11] The fact that the Blessed Sacrament was reserved there had led his mother to make her home with him. As time went on, she became ever more zealous for the beauty of the house of God; nothing could be too good for the palace of the King of kings. Hence, despite her poverty, which was often extreme in those trying days, she managed to secure the best vestments, ornaments, and other appointments for the chapel.[12] In all truth she could say with the Psalmist: "I have loved, O Lord, the beauty of Thy house and the place where Thy glory dwelleth."[13]

From the start Father Brunner took a lively interest in his mother's humble foundation; he was, in fact, the first spiritual director of the small community. Before long he began to envision other fields of labor for the Sisters, other sanctuaries where they might adore perpetually the Victim on the altar. Scarcely a year had passed since the first little band had come together, and he was already making an attempt at expansion.

Gruenenwald (Greenwood) in Friesen, Upper Alsace, had long been a spot dear to his heart. It was the scene of his first missionary labors.[14] Amid its trees stood an old shrine of the Blessed Mother — an ideal location, he thought, to begin a settlement. Two Sisters would suffice at first. They could give religious instruction to the girls of the neighboring parish and spend as much time as possible before the Blessed Sacrament to make reparation for the widespread evils of the day. There were disadvantages, of course. The times were critical. Conditions in Church and State caused one to weigh the *pros* and *cons* carefully before making any innovation. The inconvenience of the place itself had to be considered: lack of water, the uninhabitable dwelling destined for the Sisters. Besides, there was the extreme poverty of the struggling community.[15]

Undaunted by almost insurmountable obstacles, Father Brunner consulted with the pastor of Friesen about the feasibility of his plan. The pastor was willing to see it carried through. Two Sisters, one of them Sister Nothburga Wasmer, were accordingly sent to Gruenenwald to begin the work. But they remained only a short time. Bishop Raesz of Strassburg was opposed to the plan because he did not understand the asceticism of Father Brunner, whose words and example were a constant reproach to the lax clergy in the diocese. The bishop even went so far as to deprive the missionary of the exercise of his priestly office in the diocese. Father Brunner, seeing in the bishop's action the evident will of God, left Alsace and for some time desisted from any other attempt to establish a mission house of perpetual adoration.[16]

What Mother Brunner thought of the Gruenenwald venture and its failure is not known. Through daily prayer and meditation she was growing closer to God; outside concerns held little interest for her. Despite her seventy-two years and several attacks of fever since her return from Rome, she was in comparatively good health; yet the thought of death was often before her. On the feast of All Saints, 1835, this thought became a premonition; she felt sure that she would die soon.[17]

Her religious family had, under her guidance, increased in numbers as it had grown in wisdom and grace during the previous two years. Among the last whom she herself received into it was Anna Maria Albrecht, a young married woman who had separated from her husband, Joseph Albrecht, with his consent. Frau Albrecht brought with her to the castle her little daughter Rosalie, who was only eight years old. Like her mother, Rosalie was destined to play an important role in the subsequent history of the Congregation. Their entrance into the community on November 19 was the last recorded event of the year 1835.[18]

The New Year of 1836 began on Friday. A week later, January 8, Mother Brunner with her Sisters started a novena in preparation for the feast of the Holy Name of Jesus. As the general intention of this novena she asked all necessary graces for each of her daughters; for herself she begged the special grace of a happy death. With extraordinary fervor she prepared herself for that Friday's Holy Communion, offering herself anew to God as a holocaust. God was pleased with the offering which she had made many times in her life. Father Brunner puts it beautifully: "The Lord, in recognition of her fidelity and zeal in honoring His Precious Blood, placed to her lips the chalice of suffering on the very day on which He, through the shedding of every drop of His Blood, drank it to the dregs."[19]

Shortly after receiving Holy Communion she was seized with a chill which was followed by high fever. The old attack was renewed. Forced to her bed, she deplored the fact that she was unable to attend Holy Mass and make her accustomed morning hour of adoration before the tabernacle. But her vigils were over now. Resigned, she awaited the coming of the Bridegroom.

Her fever steadily increased. A burning thirst and a plaguing cough that racked her whole body gave her scarcely a moment of relief. Her physical pains were aggravated by mental sufferings. Memories of the past filled her mind. Her faults — mere peccadillos — were magnified by her feverish state and by her sincere humility. These memories seemed to cast her soul at times into the depths of despair. Yet never for a moment did she lose her trust in God.[20] Grasping her crucifix and fixing her eyes on a beautiful picture of the Sacred Heart that hung opposite her bed, she would exclaim: "O my Jesus! I do love Thee. O Jesus! have mercy on me. O Jesus! my Lord and my God! grant me faith, hope, love, humility, meekness, patience. Give me a new heart, a heart entirely according to Thy divine Heart! O Precious Blood, cleanse, strengthen, and protect me!"[21] Time and again she would call upon the holy names of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph; frequently she would whisper a fervent greeting to the Sacred Heart and the Precious Blood in the Blessed Sacrament.

Slowly the days wore on. Her devoted son Father Francis de Sales scarcely left her bedside during those long suffering hours except to snatch a bit of rest during the night. Without her knowledge he carefully noted down the last words and prayers of his dying mother. They are recorded in his little book, *Die letzten Augenblicke, die hinterlassenen Lehren und das selige Hinscheiden einer frommen Mutter* (*The Last Moments, the Bequeathed Teachings, and the Blessed Death of a Pious Mother*).[22]

On Sunday, January 10, she asked him to write a letter to her other children, which she herself dictated from her bed of suffering. It was her last New Year's greeting to them. Her strength failing after some time, she was obliged to stop for that day, but she continued it the next day and the next. This letter, which was punctuated with pangs of pain, is an embodiment of all the wise teachings that this saintly mother ever tried to inculcate in her children. It stands as her last will and testament, sealed, as it were, with her life's blood.[23]

The children of her religious family, grieved at the thought of losing their incomparable Mother, were tireless in bestowing every mark of attention upon her. During the night, in order to give Father Brunner some respite, several of them took turns watching at her bedside while the others made their usual night hours of adoration in the chapel. She wished those who remained with her to pray aloud, since she was unable to sleep. But she would not permit the slightest regulation to be neglected on her account. "I am in need of nothing," she would often remark. "Just do your duty and keep the Rule."[24] The very night on which she died she would not permit those who were making their hour of adoration nor those who had retired to be called in order to assist at her dying moments. To the end she was a perfect model of obedience to the Rule.[25]

Early on Wednesday morning, January 13, there was a slight improvement in her condition; some hope for her recovery was entertained. But the next day brought on the crisis. Thursday evening she received with great fervor Holy Viaticum and Extreme Unction. Throughout that night her sufferings both of body and of mind increased in intensity. Fierce temptations and a feeling of total abandonment filled her with deep anguish of spirit, but she rallied all her remaining forces to ward off the attacks of the tempter.[26]

Friday dawned clear and cold — it was to be her last day on earth. Despite her high fever and intense pains, she was fully conscious. She received Holy Communion — she felt certain it was her final one — with a truly apostolic intention in which she embraced the whole Church. Then came, distinct and slow, the expression of her dying wish: "I do not regret leaving anything in this world; I wish only that before my death I could have assisted in causing the Sacred Heart and the Precious Blood of Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament to be specially honored by perpetual adoration in a number of places. For this cause I would have given not only my last farthing but also the last drop of my blood. If, however, I shall find mercy before God, I hope to contribute toward this good work even in eternity."[27]

The conviction that she would die before the day was out grew upon her, but she was undismayed. To the end she preserved her wonted gayety. There was even a touch of humor in a remark she made to her attendants when they wished to warm her up a bit during a chill: "This night my soul will become warm enough."[28] To the vicar of the bishop, who called to see her, she bade a childlike and affectionate farewell and recommended herself to the prayers and Holy Masses of all the priests of the diocese, among whom she had many friends. After his departure she called for the little souvenirs she had brought with her from Rome and designated to whom each should go; even her godchildren were remembered. She made a disposition likewise of her clothes and other possessions in favor of the poor. Father Brunner assured her they would bury her in the crypt of St. Mary's in Sagens. She was consoled by the thought "that she could await the day of the glorious resurrection so near to Him in Whose presence she had spent most of her time the last few years."[29] She stipulated what pious objects she wished to be buried with her: a crucifix, a rosary, the miraculous picture of the Mother of God of Maria Stein, and a relic of St. Aloysius. "I hope," she said, "that St. Aloysius will be my support in purgatory."[30]

Then came a last touching scene. Father Francis de Sales, kneeling at the bedside of his dying mother, asked forgiveness in his own name and in behalf of his brothers and sisters for any acts of disobedience or disrespect by which they might have offended her in the past; then he begged for her maternal blessing. Weeping she exclaimed: "I have received no offense, none whatever, from you nor from the rest of my children. But even if I had, it would have been good for me had God thus punished my many failures of duty toward my children. I would have less to take with me into eternity."[31] Taking holy water she solemnly made the sign of the cross on his forehead as she said the words: "In the name of the Most Holy Trinity, through the divine Heart of Jesus and the most sweet name of Jesus may you, together with all my children and those for whom I ought to pray, be blessed, be preserved from all evils of body and soul, and be inflamed with the love of God."[32]

Her final act was characteristic of her lifelong devotion to the Passion and to the Precious Blood of her Savior. She joined the Sisters kneeling about her in praying the Stations of the Cross. After the fourth station she requested a sip of water. When asked if they should stop praying, she answered: "No, just go on; I never grow tired of it."[33] Those were her last words. When they had finished the Way of the Cross, she too had reached her journey's end. Mother Brunner had fallen asleep in the Lord.

The next morning, January 16, the tolling of the bell of St. Peter's Church at Schleuis announced the sad tidings of her death to the Alpine valleys below. The news spread rapidly. At eight o'clock a Requiem Mass was offered for her in the village church, the youth of the parish forming the choir. Throughout that day and the next, people came trudging through the snow and thronged the little chapel of St. John Nepomucene for a last glimpse of their common benefactress. For more than two years she had kept faithful vigil there before her Eucharistic Lord. Dressed in white, with a wreath of flowers about her head, she looked like a bride adorned for the coming of the Bridegroom. Her face was beautiful in death — more beautiful than it had been in life. Every trace of pain and anguish had disappeared; only loving peace and heavenly joy were evident.[34]

On Sunday her death was announced in more than forty churches. Every *Graubuendener* had known her, everyone had loved her; to all of them she was *Mother* Brunner. There was general mourning throughout the canton, the good people vying with each other in hastening to pay their respects to her venerated remains and in having Holy Masses offered for the repose of her soul.

On Monday, January 18, the funeral procession, comprised of hundreds of her admirers, slowly made its way down the side of the mountain to St. Mary's Church at Sagens, a half hour's walk from the castle.[35] After the body was placed in state before the steps leading to the sanctuary, the whole congregation joined in reciting the Office of the Dead while on the side altars Requiem Masses were being offered for the repose of her soul. Before the solemn Mass, Father George von Sursee, Apostolic Missionary and pastor of St. Mary's, delivered an inspiring eulogy in which he pointed to Mother Brunner as a model for all to imitate.[36] "The victor," he did not hesitate to say in concluding, "has already been given the crown of glory. Already has she tasted of the tree of life in the kingdom of her God. Her tears have been wiped away, for the former things are over. It seems I hear her calling out to all of us: 'Oh, come, taste, and see how sweet the Lord is.' O fathers and mothers, cast one more glance on the corpse of the pious mother. Do you not desire your end to be like hers? Children, do you not wish your father, your mother, when their last hour will have struck, the happiness that has come to this pious mother? Oh, then, let these words sink deep into your hearts: 'He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up in the last day.' "[37]

After the funeral Mass the coffin was lowered into a crypt prepared for it beneath the steps of the sanctuary. There before the altar of Our Lady, to whom Mother Brunner was ardently devoted in life, and in the shadow of the tabernacle, which had become the very center of that life, she was privileged to await her glorious resurrection. So, at least, must have thought the crowd that witnessed her burial. But God had even greater honors in store for His lowly handmaid.

Father Brunner, though he felt keenly the loss of his mother, who had undoubtedly understood him better than anyone else, bowed in submission to the will of God. His comments on her death bespeak the true Christian philosophy that early in life he had imbibed from her. "God gave her to us," he exclaimed through his tears, "God has taken her from us. To Him we willingly restore her, and if we had anything in this world dearer to us than this good mother, that too we would gladly offer to the good God. In God will we live and suffer and die. To Him be everlasting thanksgiving for all the graces He has bestowed upon this pious mother."[38]

In accordance with a wish of the dying foundress, Sister Clara, her first-born in the Lord, took charge of the bereaved religious family at the castle. The three years that she had spent in close intimacy with the pious mother had well prepared her for the task. Thoroughly grounded in the deep religious principles that had ever been the mainspring of Mother Brunner's actions, and wholly imbued with a glowing spirit of zeal, Sister Clara was determined to pass on to others the flaming torch she herself had received. She directed that the Rule be carefully written down and presented to the Bishop of Chur for ecclesiastical approbation. Having obtained permission for the Sisters to continue the manner of life they had begun, she addressed herself to the task of carrying out the smallest prescriptions of the Rule. By her extraordinary fervor and motherly kindness she induced others to follow her in its strict observance.[39] Thus was handed down the embodiment of Mother Brunner's own spirit — "gentle, patient, hard-working, humble, obedient, charitable, and above all, simple and joyous" — the true portrait of a Sister of the Precious Blood.

Chapter VI

FATHER BRUNNER BECOMES A MISSIONARY OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

A SWARM of doubts regarding his true status descended upon Father Brunner after his mother's death. The complaints against him that were still being circulated — his defection from monasteries; the self-imposed and self-directed missionary projects that he tried to start now here, now there; his money collections for supposed foreign mission enterprises — these and others he had tried to answer.[1] He still considered himself a Trappist bound by a Rule which he could not now fully observe.[2] What was he to do? Rejoin the Trappist Order, which was flourishing again in France? Or return to Maria Stein? "I feel," he wrote to Abbot Placidus, "like a lopped-off branch that can bear no fruit, since it receives no sap from the trunk."[3]

To find a way out of his difficulties, he had, in sheer desperation, written to Rome. The Holy Father's decision would be God's will for him. For months he received no answer. Meanwhile he was giving missions as far away as Basle and Zurich. Word came at last through Cardinal Castracane. Father Brunner, being better qualified by nature and by grace for a missionary career than for the solitary life, should continue to devote himself to the saving of souls — in Switzerland rather than elsewhere. But that he might be free from all doubt and diabolical illusion, he should seek counsel of a truly wise and pious director.[4]

Opportunities of doing good for the glory of God in his homeland were not wanting. Besides his missionary labors, there was his mother's work to carry on. And what more beautiful than a community of fervent souls who love God alone and allow themselves to be led by the spirit of God! Preaching alone could never convert the world. But if through the intercession of the Mother of God such small families of God's children would settle in a number of places to live their life in utter poverty and seclusion, what untold good could be accomplished through their prayers and sacrifices! It was his mother's dying wish that the Precious Blood be adored in many sanctuaries by her followers for the salvation of souls. The prayers of innocent little children whom the Sisters would befriend would be specially effective.[5]

While his mother was still living, he had fostered the hope of founding a house at Vendelincourt in Canton Berne, near the French border. A year after her death he made an attempt to carry out this desire. Having presented to the Bishop of Chur a satisfactory report of the Loewenberg Institute,[6] he received approval of a plan to establish an orphanage in the Jura region. The pastor of Vendelincourt favored the project. Father Brunner was eager to secure the services of a certain Seraphine Farine, a woman whom he considered "led by the spirit of God," to take charge of the new community. If she could not do the hard work, such as housekeeping and cooking, she could look after the general order of the house and help further the principal object of the foundation — adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament.[7]

In 1837, he purchased a house and garden which, together with repairs, cost over 12,000 francs.[8] Leaving a Father Sylvester as chaplain at the castle, Father Brunner took up his abode in the new establishment, which soon became the center of his missionary activities in the Jura district. During the next few months he worked indefatigably on the missions, conducted Forty Hours' Devotion at various churches, and often visited the shrine of Loreto at Porrentruy. Now and then he found time in the midst of his arduous labors to write a letter of encouragement to the Sisters at the castle, who must have felt his absence keenly.

> My beloved Children in Jesus Christ:
>
> I had hoped to come back to you at Easter, and then on Pentecost, but now I must postpone my return again. You will ask, When will you come then? I will not set any date this time, but shall come as soon as I can. Just as soon as affairs here are, through the grace of God and the intercession of His beloved Mother, so far settled that I can absent myself for some time, I shall hasten thither, where one can turn his gaze toward Citailg. On Pentecost the six Sundays of St. Aloysius will begin; I trust that God will give us the consolation of celebrating his feast together at Loewenberg.
>
> You must pray very fervently that God will direct our work here and remove all obstacles to it. Every Saturday — sometimes oftener — I make a pilgrimage to the Loreto chapel near the city of Porrentruy, where God dispenses His grace through the intercession of His beloved Mother. . . .
>
> I most cordially greet all of you through the divine Heart of Jesus and beg all to be united in God and to make every effort to be zealous in visiting, adoring, and honoring Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. As long as there is a family of true children of God at Loewenberg, God will take care of us. Pray for me.[9]

An excerpt from a letter to Father Sylvester, acting chaplain, shows a like concern for the spiritual welfare of the inmates of the castle:

> Our Sisters should love God with their whole hearts; they should visit our dear Lord frequently and serve Him faithfully. They are fortunate. Oh, if we only had such an opportunity here! Nothing is in order. It seems that much prayer is needed. Oh, how I'd love to be at Loewenberg in some little hidden corner! Love one another in God, be fervent, and keep the Rule conscientiously.
>
> The little ones must be very pious, diligent, and obedient. They are our hope, our joy, and our consolation. They are the innocent lambs of the flock of Jesus Christ.
>
> Our orphans and Sisters here send greetings. Pray hard for me.[10]

In both letters there is a hint of the trouble that was already brewing at Vendelincourt. Before long clergy and laity alike openly opposed the good work that Father Brunner was trying to do there. Matters came to such straits that his very life was endangered. He lost nearly all courage, for he began to doubt seriously whether his efforts to carry out this project really sprang from a good motive.[11] After sizing up the situation, he sent Seraphine to Maria Stein with a note[12] complaining to Abbot Placidus, and received in reply a sharp rebuke from his spiritual director:

> I can nowise approve of your orphanage. In fact, it has already been nipped in the bud by the government. And even if this did not prove an obstacle, its establishment, and even more so its upkeep, would require constant begging, whereby it would become an object of hate to rich and poor alike — the rich do not want to give and the poor cannot.

Neither did Father Brunner's work on the missions escape the abbot's scathing remarks. He upbraided the zealous priest for his eccentricities in food and clothing and for his general manner of life, pointing out that they were militating against the good that he could otherwise do. Moreover, he admonished his spiritual son to hold his mission exercises in a parish until the spirit of Jesus Christ had taken hold of the people; then to return to solitude for prayer and meditation until he was called to another mission. Only thus could he derive fruit from his mission labors and fulfill the wishes of the Holy See, which had freed him from his religious affiliations for that reason alone.[13]

Father Brunner humbly accepted the opinion of his adviser. The abbot was right; he (Father Brunner) was merely beating the air. While preaching to others he himself might be risking his own salvation. If only he could go to the wilds of Africa or to America — it mattered not where — and begin life over again![14]

But his cup of humiliation and suffering was not yet filled to the brim. The Abbot of Oelenberg in writing to the Vicar General of Strassburg called Father Brunner "an erring sheep" and "a victim of diabolical illusions." The letter fell into Father Brunner's hands; he was dismayed.[15] Despite the merciless criticism he had received from his director, he now laid his doubts and fears concerning his real status as a religious with childlike frankness before the Benedictine abbot, who reiterated the opinion that Father Brunner was destined for the missions:

> . . . I am more and more convinced that you have a divine vocation to the missions, for you have been gifted with all the qualities of a missionary: desire for the salvation of unbelievers and sinners, eloquence, knowledge, virtue, perseverance, etc. Too bad if you would not have the opportunity to make use of these fine talents![16]

This gave him at least some solace.

Broken in health, harassed with doubts, and utterly distrustful of himself, he turned his gaze once more toward the center of Christendom. He would entrust the future direction of his life to the Holy Father himself; only then could he be certain that he was keeping to the right path and fulfilling the holy will of God. But his concern included not only himself; it extended to the welfare of the whole Church in Switzerland. The laxity of the clergy, the indifference of the laity were dead weights upon his soul.[17] If only Gregory XVI would stretch forth a saving hand before the evil should prove incurable![18]

On December 5, 1837, he carefully noted down in his diary soul-searching answers to self-addressed questions concerning the purity of his intention and the validity of the reasons which prompted his resolution to go to Rome. Satisfied that he was acting in accordance with the dictates of conscience, he left Loewenberg early in January, 1838, to enter upon "a penitential journey to the threshold of the Apostles, in expiation for past sins, for necessary graces, especially in the hour of death, and for the welfare of the Church, particularly in Switzerland."[19]

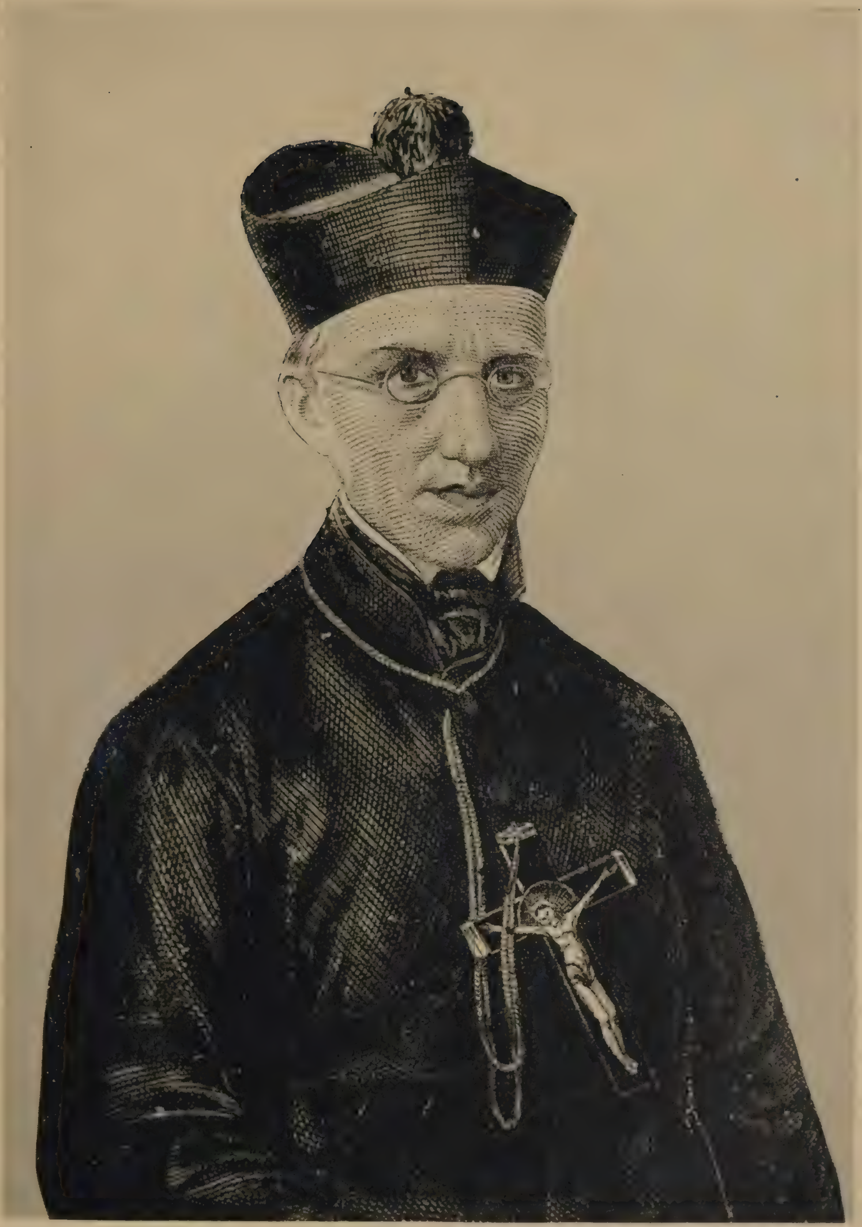
Arriving in Cesena, Italy, several weeks later, he visited a convent of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, a massive old building which had for centuries belonged to the Servites of Mary. He wrote in his diary some years afterward:

> I look upon this site as my birthplace, for toward the end of January, 1838, I saw in the sacristy of this church for the first time a Missionary of the Precious Blood with the cross on his breast, and at this glance I experienced a great yearning within me to honor the Precious Blood and to be received into the Congregation. Thanks be to God many thousand times for this grace.[20]

February of that year found him in Rome, interviewing cardinals, seeking an audience with the Holy Father, and becoming acquainted with the Missionaries of the Precious Blood. On the fifteenth day of the month he visited Albano, eighteen miles from Rome, where he met Don Blase Valentini, the successor of Gaspar del Bufalo, who had died in December. To Valentini he revealed his desire to enter the Congregation of the Precious Blood. Father Brunner decided to wait, however, until he would hear from Cardinal Franzoni, the Prefect of the Propaganda, who had presented his case to the Holy Father, Gregory XVI. Only then could he come to a final decision.

On March 9 the answer came. Cardinal Franzoni had conferred with Cardinal Castracane, the official investigator of Father Brunner's case. Father Brunner could return with a tranquil conscience to his missionary labors in Switzerland. His religious vows would be suspended as long as he was conducting missions, but he would not be wholly dispensed from them. If he chose rather to enter the Mission Institute of the Precious Blood, he could then seek full dispensation.[21]

His mind was made up. After a retreat of ten days under the direction of the Jesuits he began his probation at Albano on Holy Thursday, April 12, 1838. From that moment his soul became tranquil. He had found at long last the *margarita pretiosa* which he had been seeking for more than twenty years



THE VERY REVEREND FRANCIS DE SALES BRUNNER
Missionary of the Precious Blood

— a congregation of priests living in community life, wholly dedicated to the missions without being hampered in their work by the restrictions of the monastic vows.[22]

Life began anew for Father Brunner. Don John Merlini, third Moderator of the Congregation, wrote of him at this time: "Don Brunner gave beautiful evidence during his probation of irreproachable conduct. He applied himself diligently to study and to prayer and was a model in the observance of the Rule."[23] His leisure time was spent in translating the rules and customs of the Congregation into German and in learning Italian. With his usual facility he acquired the soft southern tongue and before long was able to help in hearing confessions.

Because of his wide experience and his proficiency in virtue and knowledge as a seasoned missionary, his time of probation was shortened. As early as June of the same year he was formally accepted by the Congregation of the Most Precious Blood,[24] but full membership was withheld pending the dispensation from his vows which he had requested of the Holy See. The decree of secularization was finally executed on July 10,[25] and on September 27 he became a full-fledged Sanguinist.[26]

Meanwhile Don Valentini had charged him with founding a house of the Congregation in Switzerland. But Father Brunner was not overjoyed at the prospect of returning to the scene of battle — at least not alone. His new-found peace of soul and sense of the closeness of God were far too precious to be lightly frittered away by the petty bickerings and grave hostilities that he knew awaited him there. Feeling incapable of carrying on so important an enterprise singlehanded, he asked for several missionaries to aid him in the task. His superiors, however, were adamant in their refusal. He should put his trust in God, they said, and in the blessing of obedience; the spirit of their saintly founder, Gaspar del Bufalo, would go with him and second his efforts.[27]

After an absence of six months Father Brunner was warmly welcomed at Loewenberg by Mother Brunner's daughters; they rejoiced to have their spiritual father in their midst once more.

He had not lost interest in his mother's work. On the contrary, he had taken up its cause with Don Valentini and with Gregory XVI himself. As a result of his efforts, the Sisters were incorporated with the Missionary Congregation under the title of Sisters Adorers of the Most Precious Blood, thenceforth to share in the rich treasure of graces and indulgences of the Society. Moreover, His Holiness had orally approved their manner of life, thereby raising the community to the status of an ecclesiastical institute.[28]

Father Brunner did not tarry long at the castle that summer. His mission was to establish a German province of the Congregation, but strangely enough his choice of a location for the first house was Alsace, not Grisons. Twice before he had been driven from French territory. Why he attempted to make a new foundation there is difficult to understand. Thither he went, nevertheless, at the invitation of a friend, Father Anthony Zimberlin of Ruesheim, who had promised to aid him in making a beginning at Eschenweiler, near Muelhausen. There was to be a retreat house for priests in connection with the seminary. A building was bought, material was ordered for improvements and repairs, and the work proceeded so rapidly that Father Brunner entertained the hope of dedicating the renovated building on October 15.[29]

Unfortunately, the founder had not reckoned with the French temperament. Bishop John Lepappe of Strassburg, hearing of the missionary's renewed activities in his diocese, bitterly opposed him and his project. He caused a circular letter to be addressed to his clergy through the vicar general, in which he denounced the missionary as a renegade, refused him permission to make a foundation in his diocese, and even deprived him of the faculty of saying Holy Mass there.[30] Upon Father Brunner's personal solicitation the last restriction was later removed.[31]

Despite all this, Father Brunner did not immediately abandon his project. He simply left France, crossing the border "which," as he wrote to his friend, "separates our unhappy fatherland from the kingdom of St. Louis, with its soil consecrated by so many penitent tears and so much blood of martyrs. No wonder," he added ruefully, "that they cast me out as a sinner, an obstinate Jonas."[32] He went to Einsiedeln, where he laid the whole affair at the feet of Our Lady, hoping against hope that she would cause the bishop to change his mind, but the controversy lasted several months without definite results.

The zealous missionary had doubtless made a mistake by acting without proper authorization of the bishop. Don Valentini told him as much in a letter containing some sound advice relative to the necessity of seeking full approbation of the bishop before undertaking any work in his diocese.[33] But it was the mistake of a man who was bent upon doing good at any cost and who, in the ardor of his endeavors, sometimes overstepped the bounds of prudence and civility.

By this time the bleak December days had ushered in the holy season of Advent. Father Brunner was worn out by the troubles and conflicts of the last few months, which contrasted so strongly with the balmy, carefree days that he had spent at Albano the preceding spring. He was glad, therefore, to retire to the quiet and seclusion of Castle Loewenberg, where he could prepare in tranquillity for the coming of the Prince of Peace.

The period of leisure that ensued was conducive to quiet reflection and calm deliberation. At length he came to the realization that, after all, Canton Grisons was the place best suited for the opening of his seminary. The Bishop of Chur was favorable, the chancellor was a friend of long standing, and the people of the canton were generally well-disposed toward him and his work. Besides, a building was already waiting to be occupied, where the Sisters were at hand to aid in the work by their prayers and labors. For the rest of that winter, while awaiting the full fruition of his plans to open a seminary of the Congregation of the Precious Blood at Loewenberg, he engaged in missionary work, determined to fulfill the will of God each passing moment.

In the third week of Lent, 1839, a young man, Peter Anthony Capeder, presented himself at the door of the castle, seeking admittance into the Congregation. Others followed, and before the year was out a dozen young men in their twenties had presented themselves as candidates for the priesthood. Most of them were poor lads with little academic training and less money. Whoever came with a good will, however, was received and given a trial.[34]

Among this first number was an exceptional youth who was destined to shed great luster on the name of the Congregation of the Precious Blood. He was Eugene Lachat, later the famous Confessor Bishop of Basle. Born on October 14, 1819, at Porrentruy, at the foot of Mont Roche d'Or, he became an orphan at an early age. The kind pastor of Grandfontaine, in the diocese of Basle, took an interest in him and directed his early education. Eugene, desirous of becoming a priest but lacking the means to enter a seminary, went forth on his own to find a way of realizing his lofty ambition.[35] Providence directed his steps to Loewenberg. Arriving about April, 1839, he continued his studies in the humanities and began to learn German under the tutorship of Father Brunner. He was so far in advance of his fellow-students, however, and showed such admirable qualities of mind and heart, that the missionary decided to send him to Albano to prepare for the priesthood. A testimonial letter which Father Brunner sent along with him gives evidence of Eugene's sterling character.[36] Don Merlini was no less pleased with the ardor and zeal of the youth, for he wrote to Father Brunner at the end of the next year:

> Eugene has already written to you. He is about to be raised to the order of subdeacon. If you have any other lads of similar character, gifted in every respect like Eugene, to send here, present them to the director-general, and he will write you to send them.[37]

The other students were not of Eugene's caliber. Father Brunner soon discovered that he had assumed a difficult task in endeavoring to educate them for the missions. Not one of them knew even the rudiments of the Latin language. But they were sensible lads, eager to learn and willing to work; the majority were well instructed in their religion; several were talented. With his usual tenacity of purpose Father Brunner set to work, beginning at the bottom. To the study of Latin he gradually added other branches that are essential to the formation of a priest. Slowly but surely progress was made. Great emphasis was placed on the spiritual exercises which they made in common and upon the observance of the rule of life for students drawn up by Gaspar del Bufalo. They were imbued with zeal for the glory of the Precious Blood and with a tender devotion to the Mother of God. Frequent pilgrimages were made to her shrine at Seewis. Nothing was neglected that would make them true campaigners for Christ.

The Sisters were overjoyed at the sight of these young men preparing for the priesthood. God was visibly answering their prayers. Good, pious priests for God's Church — that was what Mother Brunner had always prayed for, and she had enjoined the practice upon them as a most solemn duty. Incessant prayers in the castle chapel were not sufficient; they had to go on pilgrimages to Seewis, to Citailg, to Einsiedeln. That is what the pious Mother would have done! Heaven had to be taken by storm!

Prayer alone would not feed and clothe a dozen grown men. The Sisters had to work hard, often in the sweat of their brow, to procure the necessary books and to keep the wardrobe and larder filled. They made many personal sacrifices in order at the same time to care for their orphans and to dispense alms to the poor who continued to come to their door. When funds failed and they knew no other way out of their difficulty, they went begging in the neighborhood or sought out benefactors among their relatives.[38]

One hard year the self-sacrificing charity of the Sisters demanded heroic efforts. There was a dearth of priests and Father Brunner was assigned by the bishop to the parish of Valz in St. Petersthal, about fifteen miles from Loewenberg. The students could not be left to shift for themselves; their training had to go on. There was nothing left to do but to pack off the whole lot of them to Valz, where they could continue their studies without interruption. For the Sisters this meant untold physical hardship. They were confronted with the twofold difficulty of scraping together enough provisions and then of transporting them to Valz. A horse and wagon could not be used on the narrow mountain passes — only an ass would do. So they loaded it up, and forth and back they trudged — these noble women of God, some of them on the way most of the time — to administer to the needs of the young clerics. When Valz received its own pastor a year later, Father Brunner returned with the seminarians to the castle and the old order was resumed.[39]

The meager income of the Sisters was, of course, not adequate to cover all the expenses of the seminary. Already toward the end of the year 1839, when the need was most pressing, Father Brunner had sent out students to different parts of Switzerland to obtain subscriptions of money for the institute. Special prayers were promised all subscribers: a daily rosary before the Blessed Sacrament by the students and Sisters; a weekly Holy Mass and Communion; each First Friday a high Mass to honor the Precious Blood in the castle chapel; twice a year — namely, on the feasts of St. Aloysius and of St. Francis Xavier — an offering of all the prayers and good works performed that day.[40] Outstanding among the benefactors gained for the seminary were Joseph Albrecht, whose wife and daughter were inmates of the castle, and Maire Buergaenzle, who advanced money to help meet the payments on the house at Eschenweiler; which Father Brunner had not yet sold. With this financial aid he and the Sisters were enabled to carry on their work.[41]

Early in November, 1840, two of the students — Sebastian Capaul and M. Anthony Meier — after being examined by the Vicar General of Chur, were considered sufficiently advanced to be admitted to Holy Orders. They were ordained by Bishop George Pruenster of Feldkirch, Austria. Before the end of the year Martin Bobst was added to their number.[42] In December, Father Brunner received faculties from Rome to admit these three newly ordained priests, together with several of the more promising students, into the ranks of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood.[43] The Sisters felt themselves amply repaid for their prayers and sacrifices.

Meanwhile the attitude of the Bishop of Strassburg had softened toward Father Brunner, and he finally permitted him to make a foundation at St. Odielien, an ancient convent situated on Hohenberg, which towers 2,500 feet above Colmar in Alsace. In the course of its history, which dates from the sixteenth century, the building was used in turn as a convent for Benedictine nuns and as a priory for the Canons Regular of St. Norbert. It had been abandoned and the shrine connected with the church had fallen into ruins.[44] Father Brunner's object in purchasing St. Odielien was to establish there a community house where perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament would be introduced and continual prayers offered "for the conversion of sinners and for the welfare of the diocese."[45]

Early in 1841, Father Capaul, Father Bobst, and a student were sent there to make a start. Sister Nothburga Wasmer went along as housekeeper. But they remained less than two years. St. Odielien was given up in favor of another shrine of "Our Lady Bountiful" upon which Father Brunner had set his heart. The funds that had been subscribed for the first building were directed instead to the restoration of *Drei Aehren* (*Trois Epis*), a once flourishing shrine of Mary near Colmar.

The name *Drei Aehren* — "Three Ears" — is derived from the three heads of wheat on a single stem which the Mother of God in 1491 is said to have presented to a village smithy as a pledge of her intercession with God to avert a severe chastisement that was about to befall the people of that region. Later a shrine was built on the spot, which for centuries attracted innumerable pilgrims from all parts of Europe.

But when Father Brunner first visited the site, he found both the ancient shrine and the adjoining monastery in a state of neglect and ruin — a sad contrast to the surpassing beauty of the natural scenery for miles around. Having been commissioned by Don Valentini to purchase the place, he immediately began to restore the church to its pristine splendor and to make the monastery habitable. On November 11, 1842, Father Sebastian Capaul came from St. Odielien, while Father Anthony Meier, Brothers Bernard Echert and Francis Trendle, and a certain student by the name of Aloysius came from the castle. Sister Nothburga was appointed to look after their temporal needs.

Here a more permanent foundation was made. During the next thirty years (1842-1872) while the Fathers of the Precious Blood were in charge of the shrine, it regained some of its former renown, becoming again the scene of frequent pilgrimages in honor of Mary. Father Eugene Lachat, later superior of the community, was responsible for the complete restoration of the shrine. He himself became famous throughout that region as a successful preacher and holy priest.[46]

The converting of *Drei Aehren* into an active mission center was Father Brunner's last effort at making a foundation in Alsace or in his homeland. The time had at length arrived when his ardent desire to transfer his apostolic labors to America — a desire that he had entertained in his heart for twelve years — was to be realized.

Chapter VII

OFF FOR AMERICA!

WHILE Father Brunner was engaged in apostolic work in Switzerland, the Northwest Territory in far-off America was just emerging from the darkness of primeval forests. In 1803, Ohio, land of the "Beautiful River," as the Indians called it, had been admitted to the Union. But the number of white settlers was still very small and danger from lurking redskins was constantly imminent. The power of the Indian warriors had been severely crippled in 1795, when they were forced to sign the Treaty of Greenville; but it was not until after a series of treaties, the last in 1818, that they were completely routed and Ohio was made safe for settlement.[1] After that date the number of immigrants doubled and trebled in a short space of time.

When Bishop Fenwick came to the newly created See of Cincinnati in 1821, there were over 6,000 Catholics among the half million inhabitants of Ohio.[2] Since they were scattered throughout the state, it was difficult to administer to the spiritual wants of all of them. There were other difficulties: the inconvenience of communication and travel, the dearth of laborers in the vineyard of the Lord, the utter poverty of the settlers. But Bishop Fenwick did all that he could and ten years later, in 1831, when he died a victim of cholera, Catholicity in his diocese was making rapid progress.[3]

Bishop Purcell, his successor, continued the work, calling for more and more missionaries from foreign shores. Seven times he crossed the seas to seek spiritual and temporal aid for his impoverished flock.[4] On one of these trips (1843) he was accompanied by a zealous priest, Father John M. Henni, a native of Switzerland. While visiting his home in Obersaxen, Father Henni met Father Brunner, to whom he gave a vivid account of the spiritual destitution of the many German immigrants in Ohio. The sad plight of his countrymen stirred the soul of Father Brunner to its depths and enkindled anew the desire that had long been smoldering there. His meeting with Father Henni settled the matter. Nothing would deter him any longer from carrying out his purpose. He had a dozen recruits in his "foreign legion," he had a definite field of action and an urgent invitation to occupy it; he needed only a word of command from his superior general at Rome.[5]

To be certain that he was acting in accordance with the will of God, he took counsel with several ecclesiastics on whose good judgment he felt that he could rely. Del Carl, Coadjutor of Chur, wholly favored the enterprise; Monsignor Baal, ex-Chancellor of Chur, advised him to await a direct command from Rome. "St. Francis Xavier would certainly not have gathered such a great harvest of souls," he admonished, "if he had not been expressly sent by St. Ignatius. If Rome sends you, then go without concern; the Lord will be with you."[6]

Acting on this advice, Father Brunner wrote a letter to Don Valentini in which he outlined his plans: four of his priests desired to remain at *Drei Aehren,* and one would be left in charge of the Sisters at Loewenberg; the other seven and several students would set out with him for America in the near future. He asked to be recommended to Bishop Purcell, who was soon to arrive in Rome, by His Eminence Cardinal Franzoni, Prefect of the Propaganda, and by the Holy Father himself.[7]

A few days later a more detailed account of his plans followed. Fearing that his associates would receive a commission and he would be left behind, he ingeniously set forth the reasons for his own departure: the hostile attitude of the Swiss clergy toward him personally, a circumstance which prevented his doing much good in his homeland; the advice of his ecclesiastical superiors of Chur, who even persuaded him to carry out the project; the improved condition of his health, which in the opinion of his physician would be completely restored through a change of climate. He expressed a single fear — namely, that he was utterly unworthy of so lofty a mission; hence he asked that another be appointed superior in his stead. As to traveling expenses, there was already some money on hand, Bishop Purcell had promised to defray part of them, and the Blessed Virgin would provide the rest.[8]

More than a month passed, however, and no reply came from Rome. Father Brunner, growing impatient at the delay, set about making such preparations for the journey as he could, confident that an answer would ultimately come. On August 28 he sent a last appeal. Unless they embarked soon, weather conditions would force them to postpone their trip to the following spring.[9] Three more weeks dragged on. Finally on September 20 the long-awaited permission was received and preparations were speedily completed.

Father Brunner refrained from asking financial aid from the motherhouse at Rome or from the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. He knew that he would have to procure the necessary funds himself. Again the self-sacrificing spirit of the Sisters rose to the occasion. With disinterested generosity and at the cost of great personal effort they obtained sufficient funds to send their brother priests across the sea. Although the journey meant the loss of their spiritual father and of the privilege of hearing many Holy Masses daily in the castle chapel, to say nothing of the deprivation of the very necessities of life — yet the salvation of souls redeemed by the Precious Blood of Christ was worth all that and infinitely more. So they gave unstintingly, almost stripping the chapel of its sacred vessels, relics, and vestments to supply the needs of their brothers in Christ.[10]

To return thanks to God for His favors and to obtain His benediction, the whole community — priests, students, Brothers, and Sisters — made a final pilgrimage to the shrine of the Sorrowful Mother at Seewis. The priests offered Holy Mass and the others received Holy Communion. All dedicated themselves anew to the Mother of God and besought her help and protection for the perilous voyage which the missionaries were about to undertake.[11]

Father Brunner, accompanied by Father Anthony Meier, left Loewenberg before the rest of the company in order to make some necessary purchases and to visit the mission house at *Drei Aehren* once more.[12] There he wrote a final letter of instructions to Father Joseph Butz, who was to take charge of Loewenberg, and several letters of encouragement to the Sisters and children.[13] In writing to the Sisters he hinted at their possible departure for America at a later date: "I say to you what the Savior said to His beloved disciples: Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. You shall see Me again. I go to prepare a place for you." Then he paid high tribute to their self-sacrificing zeal:

> Long ago you gave your hearts to God, and you will therefore rejoice in God that such a rich harvest has been opened to our priests where many souls can be saved. You have done for me and for these priests what a mother does for her own children: you have by your prayers helped them to the priesthood and by the sweat of your brow clothed and fed them; the money for our traveling expenses is for the most part your savings. I therefore ask you to finish the beautiful good work which you have begun — namely, to persevere in the observance of the Rule in honor of the Precious Blood. Then God will surely bless us.[14]

The day set for the departure of the missionaries from Loewenberg was September 29, the feast of St. Michael. In a spirit of true chivalry these knights-errant of Mary first went to pay their respects to their Lady at Einsiedeln before faring forth on their high adventure. At her shrine on October 1 they celebrated the feast of the Holy Rosary. Then, praying the rosary, pilgrim fashion, they crossed the mountain and struck the road that leads over Zurich to Basle. It was a weary band of pilgrims who sought lodging in Basle that night, but there was ample time to rest. Their trunks had been left behind at

Zurich and several of the company who had been sent on errands had not yet returned so that it was fully a week before they could take the diligence for Paris.[15]

Arriving there on October 11, they were hospitably received by Abbé Desgenettes, the pastor of Notre Dame. Their brief stay in the French capital was made memorable by the kindness of this venerable curé, who gave them eight hundred Mass stipends. There were further delays in le Havre. While in this city it was their good fortune to be directed to Monsieur M. Marzion, the President of St. Vincent de Paul's Society, who had recently founded a traveling agency to aid missionaries and religious in securing comfortable and economical passage abroad. He made reservations for them on the new ship *Vesta,* which was about to sail, and directed the buying of provisions and the checking of their baggage. The Sisters of St. Ursula at the hospital where the Fathers lodged generously added to their store of provisions and gave them some beautiful church vestments. Father Brunner looked upon these acts of kindness as so many marks of divine favor, which he ascribed to the continuous prayers of the Sisters at the castle.

While awaiting favorable weather conditions in le Havre, the America-bound missionaries unexpectedly met Bishop Purcell, who, on his way back to Cincinnati, had missed the ship two days before. He took a fatherly interest in them, assuring them of a welcome to his diocese, where they were sorely needed for the German population. Father Brunner described Bishop Purcell as a "young and very charming gentleman."[16] Later he was to experience the full measure of that warmth and geniality which were characteristic of the Bishop of Cincinnati.

On October 20, the *Vesta* set sail. It was a solemn moment when she weighed anchor and slowly and majestically moved out of port. For Father Brunner it meant the dream of a lifetime suddenly leaping into reality. At last he was off for America. With him were seven priests — Fathers M. Anthony Meier, M. John Wittmer, John Van den Broeck, Anthony Capeder, Martin Bobst, Jacob Ringele, John Baptist Jacomet — and seven students — Peter Homburger, Henry Buesser, Peter J. Kreusch, Matthias Kreusch, Fridolin Baumgartner, Aloysius Katrischer, and Stephen Gschwind. Another priest, Father Carl J. Margritelli, who had accompanied Father John Van den Broeck on a short visit to the latter's home in Holland, failed to return.[17]

The leaves of the journal Father Brunner kept during this voyage and the letters that he wrote at intervals to Loewenberg castle reveal the great hardships and inconveniences of a sea voyage a century ago. Progress depended entirely upon weather conditions, and the time required to cross the Atlantic was figured in months rather than in days. A mere plaything of the elements, the sailship was battered about by wind and storm or becalmed in mid-ocean, and the meager conveniences for passengers could not be compared with the equipment of a modern steamship. Steamers were regularly plying the ocean at the time (1843), but it cost almost a fortune to obtain passage on one of them.

According to Father Brunner's account it took weeks for the *Vesta* to reach Liverpool. Terrific storms forced her to lay at anchor for days off the Isle of Wight near the little town of Cowes. One awful night high winds swept over the channel, tore the anchor loose from its moorings, and thrust the ship between rocky cliffs, where it was in danger of being shattered. In this extremity, so runs the account, Father Brunner exposed for veneration a painting of Our Lady, *Maria im Stein,* which he had received as a parting gift from Abbot Placidus[18] with the memorable words: "Take this picture of the Mother of God as a remembrance and as a constant reminder that no matter where you go you are the court chaplain of the Mother of God. Be spiritual-minded and desire to live solely and entirely for her interests."[19] At the exposition of the picture the winds immediately subsided, the sea grew calm, and the sailors were enabled to cast anchor. Bishop Purcell attributed their timely rescue to the intervention of the Mother of God.[20]

In all the fears and uncertainties of their voyage the one consolation of the missionaries was the Holy Sacrifice of the

Mass, which was offered by each of the priests whenever the weather conditions permitted. For this purpose a room had been provided by the captain, Monsieur Soubry, a devout Catholic. Bishop Purcell also offered Holy Mass in this improvised chapel several times. On Sundays and feast days a temporary altar was erected in the large drawing room of the ship and all Catholics were invited to attend. On one occasion Father Brunner was requested by the bishop to preach in French.

Because of the indefinite delay near the Isle of Wight, Bishop Purcell, desiring to be home for Christmas, decided to board the first steamer which would take him to Liverpool and from there direct to New Orleans. Since his funds were too low to cover the cost of the trip, Father Brunner lent him the sum of $337. On October 31 the priests regretfully took leave of their new friend; he in turn reassured them by his paternal blessing and by his promise of a warm welcome in their new home.[21] A letter written a few days later by Father Brunner, at the request of the bishop, states that the *Vesta* did not leave Cowes to begin her long, wearisome journey southward until November 5.[22]

The next nine days were the most trying of all for the passengers on the *Vesta*. She had set sail with a favorable wind carrying the jubilant strains of the *Ave, Maris Stella* far out over the water. After a few hours, however, she was suddenly becalmed long before she had reached high seas. Throughout that night and the following day she

> "... stuck, nor breath, nor motion;
> As idle as a painted ship
> Upon a painted ocean."[23]

This period of calm was followed by fearful storms and downpouring rains. Most of the missionaries, suffering from seasickness, were forced to keep to their beds for days at a time. Even so, they were obliged to hold to the sides of their cots to keep from rolling out. Father Brunner in recounting these experiences aptly quoted the words of the Psalmist:

> He said the word, and there arose a storm of wind, and the waves thereof were lifted up.
>
> They mount up to the heavens, and they go down to the depths; their soul pined away with evils.
>
> They were troubled, and reeled like a drunken man; and all their wisdom was swallowed up.
>
> And they cried to the Lord in their affliction, and He brought them out of their distresses (Ps. CVI, 25-28).[24]

When a spell of fair weather at length set in on November 14, and the Fathers and Brothers had recovered from seasickness, the Rule was enforced as strictly as it had been in the castle. The day was divided into periods of prayer, study, and silence. Even the customary retreat of nine days was held in preparation for the feast of St. Francis Xavier (December 3).[25] This rigid observance of the Rule may have been hard on some of the members, but it at least had the advantage of making the long, tedious hours pass more quickly. By imposing this strict monastic discipline Father Brunner was unwittingly preparing the way for the defection of several of his followers; only the more fervent and self-sacrificing among them were to persevere.

On December 7, the eve of the feast of the Immaculate Conception, they glimpsed land for the first time as they passed the island of Haiti at a distance. At this point their minds began to be filled with misgivings at the prospect of dealing with Americans of whose language and customs they were ignorant. How would they know where to secure passage for the river voyage that still lay before them? Who would act as their interpreter in purchasing tickets and rechecking baggage?

When they arrived in New Orleans, however, two weeks later, their fears were banished. Before they could land, a captain of a steamboat that was about to sail for Cincinnati came on board the *Vesta* to seek north-bound passengers. He struck a bargain with them at reasonable rates for reservations on the steamer and promised that he would have all their baggage transferred.

With joy Father Brunner set foot for the first time on the land of his dreams. His heart was jubilant as he uttered the Fifth Great Antiphon, which the Church the world over was singing that day in preparation for the coming of the Savior:

> O Dawn of the East, Brightness of the Light Eternal, come and enlighten them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.

For him the words took on a deeper significance than ever before.

That same day they left for Cincinnati. The captain of the boat, James Irwin, though not a Catholic, showed them every mark of respect and endeavored to accommodate them in every way possible. Father Brunner asked him for some quiet corner where they could offer Mass, at least on Christmas Day. Since there were no women on board, Captain Irwin generously gave over to them the ladies' drawing room for this purpose and assigned them the adjacent cabins for lodging. Undisturbed, they spent the remaining few days before the great feast in fasting and prayer while enjoying the everchanging scenery along the Mississippi.[26]

Christmas Eve of 1843 was spent on the great Father of Waters, and that memorable scene has been vividly recaptured by a spiritual son of Father Brunner:

> It is Christmas Eve. From the greyish heights of heaven is silently falling a crystal-line mantle robing the dismal earth in spotless white to make her appear with unsullied aspect in the celebration of this, the year's most joyful feast. Fence and house, tree and shrub lie covered in the shining whiteness. Far to the east and to the west stretch the ever widening prairies merging into trackless plains over which the north wind courses with untiring breath. Serpentlike the great Mississippi winds southward its ceaseless course.

Along its banks the frolicking wind piles up huge mounds of snow; then, like a child disgusted with its play, it sends all in blinding sheets out over the flowing waters. Here and there cakes of snow-laden ice are drifting to and fro, until at last, kissed by smiling sunbeams, they linger a moment and then become absorbed in the warm bosom of the south.

Bedecked with the newly fallen snow and breasting the winter breezes, a steamer wends northward her solitary passage. In her wake lie myriads of jewels reflected in the moon's pale glow. Nought is there to disturb the solemnity of this midnight hour of Christmas Eve save the chug of the engines and the rushing of the water at the sides of the ship. The stillness is profound. Nature herself, as it were, is commemorating the scene enacted centuries ago on this memorable night.

From a cabin window comes a glimmer of light which sheds its reflecting rays far out upon the river's heaving bosom, seeking to illumine the dark recesses of the wooded banks. A prophetic light it is indeed, for by the spiritual children of those whose light now shines across the river, a far greater light, that of holy Faith, is one day to be enkindled not only on the Mississippi's banks but in the very lands from which this river springs.

In spirit we enter the ship as she plies northward her belated course. From a distant chamber comes the sound of footsteps upon the naked floor, breaking the deathlike calm that hangs over all. A light gleams for a moment, then springs into a flickering ray. And behold, a wonderful sight presents itself to our gaze. By the candle's feeble glow we discern an altar, and around it kneel more than a dozen adoring figures. As one by one the candles upon the altar send forth their sparkling light, the sacredness of the scene becomes more vivid. The heads of all are bent in silent prayer. The garbs of some bespeak the ambassadors of Christ, and the cross upon their breasts is token of a common religious bond, while in the others we readily recognize the brotherhood of a religious community.

But whence these men, and why these strange proceedings at this solemn midnight hour? They are no other than the pioneer Missionary Fathers and Brothers of the Community of the Most Precious Blood on their way to found a new province in America's limitless fields. From the mountain lands of Switzerland have they come, braving the dangers of the waves, to sow in American soil the seeds of devotion to the Precious Blood. Filled with zeal divine for the spread of its greater glory, they have left their peaceful homes to diffuse the light of Faith in a distant land.

Their tacit annals recount manifold dangers and hardships ere we picture them on this singular Christmas Eve of '43. Theirs was an undying faith and hope, a love that knew no bounds, and a childlike trust in the Star of the Sea, who stood as a beacon on their long and stormy voyage.

Welcomed to the diocese of Cincinnati, they bent every effort to reach their future fields of labor before the colds of winter would come upon them. But Christmas overtook them in their travels, and hence it is that on this Christmas Eve we find them assembled in that little cabin to offer up to the heavenly Father a Mass of thanksgiving and petition. Their faces aglow with fervent love and eager hope, they kneel around their newly constructed altar. Men they are with the ensign of sacrifice written on their brows. Simple and plain their manners, yet firm and sincere their aspirations; men they are, well prepared to establish a religious community and guide its destinies in a foreign country.

Already the Holy Sacrifice has begun. No voluminous organ peals forth its echoing strains through vaulted arch or widening transept. No gleaming lights reflect burnished gold or polished silver. All is as unostentatious as the humble abode wherein centuries ago was born the world's Redeemer. The voices of those assisting, mingled with the sound of the onrushing waves, re-echo softly through the room. The penetrating cold is counteracted by the glowing fire enkindled in each one's breast.

What pen can describe the solemnity of that midnight hour! What words can express the feelings of those first missionary Fathers of the American province as in a strange land they offer up the Holy Sacrifice! With what words of supplication must not heaven have been stormed that night!

> But lo! The solemn moment of consecration has come. Around the altar kneel the humble adoring figures, rapt in the solemnity of the mystery. The celebrant in deepest reverence bends low over the chalice and pronounces those sacred words whereby the Son of God becomes incarnate upon the altar; and as he completes these heavenborn words, from the depths of that Precious Blood there flashes a vision to his gaze. He sees a fragile bark tossed to and fro upon the raging sea. It rises and falls on the surging waters, and huge billows roll over it, threatening it with immediate destruction. But the sea subsides, the ship with flying sail rights herself, buoyant and firm, while in the distance appear the receding shoals and rocks. And the missionary understands! With undaunted courage and firm confidence in the Precious Blood he elevates the chalice of oblation. He understands that theirs is to be a life of sacrifice and labor, of toil and struggle, but that the infant community will weather the tempests, and peace and serenity will at last reign supreme.
>
> Thrice on this memorable Christmas Eve, each of the eight priests had the happiness of offering up the Holy Sacrifice. Here it was that a still more fervent love for the Precious Blood descended upon this little band, which gave them strength to bear the trials which were soon to be their lot.[27]

On December 28, the sixth anniversary of the death of Gaspar del Bufalo, the steamer entered the waters of the Ohio. Three days later on Sunday, the last day of the year, it reached Cincinnati shortly after the missionaries had finished reading First Vespers of the following day, the feast of the Circumcision — the first shedding of the Precious Blood. They went directly to the episcopal residence on Sycamore Street, where Bishop Purcell received them with fatherly kindness, made them guests at his table, and served them with his own hands. Father Henni, the Vicar General, was equally kind, bestowing on them every mark of attention to make them feel at home.

On New Year's Day each of the priests said a Mass of thanksgiving in one or other of the three churches — St. Francis

Xavier, Holy Trinity, or St. Mary. In St. Mary's Church Father Brunner preached his first sermon in America. Though he merely mentions the fact in his journal, we may perhaps surmise what the theme of that sermon was. By a strange coincidence the Church was celebrating the Circumcision, a feast of the Precious Blood; the fire of his devotion must have leaped forth in a blaze that set the German congregation of St. Mary's wondering at the eloquence of the stranger missionary.[28]

During their short stay at the episcopal residence Bishop Purcell acquainted the missionaries with the difficulties and hardships of pioneer life, assuring them at the same time of his personal interest in their welfare and the success of their labors in the backwoods. He confirmed Father Brunner's appointment as superior of the community and conferred upon him all necessary faculties. Then bestowing his blessing, he sent them on their way full of confidence but without any illusions as to what the future might hold in store for them in their newly assigned mission field in northern Ohio.

Their definite goal was Peru, near Norwalk, where they were to take charge of St. Alphonse's Church and attend to the spiritual needs of German immigrants in outlying settlements. To reach their destination they went as far as Wellsville by steamer, arriving there on January 6, the feast of Epiphany. Attired in their religious garb (the priests especially conspicuous with the large cross on their breast), they drew a curious, gaping crowd as they landed at this Protestant town. The word went around that they were spies sent out by the Pope and that soon a large army would appear to force the Catholic religion on all dissenters. Despite these untoward remarks, however, they were permitted to go on their way unmolested.

At Wellsville they engaged several large farm wagons to bring them and their baggage to a point farther north. But the roads were poor and travel was extremely slow. Several halts were made — at Hanover, Canton, Massillon, Ashland, Wooster — and they remained long enough to offer Mass, administer the sacraments, and preach the word of God to an appreciative German population which had been without the consolations of religion for some time. This, their first taste of missionary work in the new country, whetted their desire to reach their journey's end.[29]

Finally after more than a week's roughing it over rutty mud roads they drew up at Norwalk, a good-sized town in Huron County. They had now only three miles to go. Father Brunner recounts in his inimitable way the incidents of that last lap of their journey:

> These last three miles proved . . . the hardest of the whole trip. The driver . . . would go no farther, although he had engaged to take us as far as St. Alphonse's; besides, we had to pay him a second time despite the fact that we had paid him in advance. He piled the trunks and baggage on the road and hurried away.
>
> It was nightfall and a storm was approaching. With our goal so near at hand, we had no desire to spend the night in town, where there were but few Catholics. We put the trunks and baggage in a safe place, secured a guide with a lantern, and started to walk to St. Alphonse's. Meanwhile it had become pitch dark, the rain was pouring down in torrents, and the wind was blowing from all sides. The road, a mere mud road without rock bottom, became so impassable on account of the rain that it was like forcing our way through thick mortar. We fell from one hole into another. If one of us wanted to help another out of a rut, he himself got into one. The way was unfamiliar to all of us; we did not know whether we were to go up or down, to the right or to the left. The light availed little in the rain and storm. Our guide had no less trouble than if he had been obliged to lead fifteen blind men, each along his own separate path. Yet we had to keep on going in order to finish our journey, for none of us had any desire to spend the night on the road.
>
> At long last, between eight and nine o'clock, our guide exclaimed: "Go on bravely; we are near St. Alphonse's Church!" All of us were wet through and through, and our

> clothes were so full of mud from head to foot that you would have thought we had been dragged through the gutters. We called a man residing near by, who had the key to the church and the parish house. He opened the door of the rectory and made light and then fire so that we could dry ourselves a bit. The house proved to be a small cabin in which there was little else to protect one against the inclemencies of the weather than doors and windows.
>
> The good man could scarcely contain himself for joy at the sight of so many priests and Brothers arriving at the same time, and when he noticed the condition we were in, he exclaimed: "*Bravo! Bravo! Deo gratias!* That is a good sign that everything hereafter will take a turn for the better: for the harder the beginning, the more promising the continuance, and the more blessed the end." His listeners had simply to make an act of faith in his words, for at the time they could not comprehend their meaning. The same man had the kindness to fetch us something to eat from his own house.[30]

Thus far Father Brunner's own account. The weary missionary must have slept little that night. He was too happy. God had, indeed, dealt wonderfully with His servant in leading him thus through a maze of almost insurmountable difficulties to the goal of his desires. As he laid himself down on the hard floor that served as his bed, there was a song of exultation in his heart which broke forth from his lips in the words of the Psalmist: "Praise the Lord, for He is good: for His mercy endureth forever" (Ps. cxxxv, 1).[31]

PART TWO

EXPANSION

(1844-1887)

Chapter I

FOUNDATIONS IN NORTHERN OHIO

PERU, a small German settlement in the northeastern section of Ohio, had had quite a history before the Fathers of the Precious Blood arrived there in the winter of 1844. Fifteen years before that date a colony of six families from Alsace (among them the Bauers, Carabins, Hefeles, and Koechles) had built their log cabins on a clearing in the woods and settled down to peaceful farm life.

The soul of the little colony was an exiled nun, Frances Bauer, formerly a Sister of Divine Providence, who had been driven from France in the political upheaval that culminated in the July Revolution of 1830. She went by her given name Francesca, or Frances, but was more commonly known as the "hermitess." She had an outstanding personality and exerted much influence upon this pioneer community. Deeply religious, she had been educated according to the best traditions of European culture. She had command of the German and French languages, and readily acquired English. This accomplishment alone gave her ascendency over her countrymen, who soon came to rely upon her as their interpreter in all official transactions. Moreover, she possessed the initiative and adaptability of character which enable one to rise above the exigencies of time and place and gain control of situations, even the most trying and unpromising. In a word, she was well equipped to blaze a trail in the Ohio wilderness, whither Providence had led her.

Determined to continue her life of prayer undisturbed, she built a little hut in the woods — a veritable hermitage — apart from the dwellings of the other settlers; hence, the appellation *Waldschwester,* or "Sister of the Woods," which was sometimes given to her. She not only supported herself by the work of her hands but contributed toward the general needs of the pioneers. She nursed the sick, consoled the afflicted, guided and instructed the youth, settled disputes.

But there was no church, no priest, and, of course, no sacraments — nothing to keep alive the spark of faith that these sturdy immigrants had brought from the old country. Even to make their Easter duty meant indescribable hardship: traveling a distance of a hundred miles, often through pathless forests and swamps, to Canton, Ohio, where Father John Martin Henni, the nearest German-speaking priest, resided. Children were growing up ignorant of God and of their holy religion. The "hermitess" especially missed the consolations that holy Mother Church alone can afford, and she was loath to see her people deprived of them.

She decided to do something about the matter. Convinced that where there was a church there would soon be a pastor, she made an appeal to the leading members of the community. With the permission of Bishop Purcell, they began building a small log church near the edge of the woods. The "hermitess" personally supervised the construction and often put her own hand to the rough work. Father Henni, delegated by the bishop, came to bless the church in 1830 and called it St. Michael's. He returned every two or three months to offer Holy Mass and administer the sacraments. In the intervals between his visits the faithful would assemble in the new church each Sunday, recite the Mass prayers in common, and read the Goffine to take the place of a sermon. In the afternoon the "hermitess" gathered the children for religious instruction.[1]

Bishop Purcell, hearing of the zeal of the growing parish, visited St. Michael's in 1833. He decided that it was sufficiently large to have a pastor of its own and sent the Redemptorists to take charge. There was no roof to shelter them, but Francesca was equal to the emergency. She offered her own small hut for their use until, in answer to her urgent appeals to the good will of the settlers, a parish house large enough to accommodate several priests stood ready for them.

The Redemptorists remained in charge of the parish for eight years. During this time the name of the church was changed to St. Alphonse's in honor of their founder. The reason for their departure is not certain. Some ascribe it to too great interference in parish affairs on the part of the devout "hermitess"; others to disunity and antagonism among the parishioners.

For a short time St. Alphonse's was left without a pastor. The bishop, realizing that the size of the parish demanded one, sent a priest who unfortunately proved to be a scoundrel and became involved in a scandal. Some of the parishioners sided with the renegade priest, while others bitterly opposed him and his adherents. Bishop Purcell made the long, wearisome journey from Cincinnati in person to settle the affair, but with little result. He suspended the priest, who retaliated by working directly against the Church; the breach within the parish remained unhealed. The flock was again without a shepherd for the simple reason that their chief pastor had none to place over them.[2] No wonder he welcomed Father Brunner and his mission band on New Year's Day of 1844! To this neglected portion of his flock he sent them, and they arrived, as we have already seen, one stormy night some weeks later.

The following day — Saturday — news of the arrival of so many missionaries spread like wildfire throughout the settlement. Men, women, and children were soon streaming in from all sides to welcome them. "We thought we saw," wrote Father Brunner, "the shepherds of Bethlehem, who as they hastened to the crib, told the good tidings to one another."[3] The grateful parishioners vied with each other in supplying the immediate needs of the newcomers. One housewife hastened home to return with bread and milk; another furnished meat, butter, and vegetables. Some men brought chairs and tables; others carried in firewood. The former church wardens stepped forward to offer their assistance in hauling the baggage from Norwalk. The "hermitess" was on hand to supervise the cleaning of the church in preparation for Holy Mass.

When the baggage arrived, the most necessary articles were hastily unpacked so that the priests could offer the Holy Sacrifice that same day in honor of Our Lady. It was a fervent Mass of thanksgiving for their safe voyage and their warm reception into their new home. They would begin their missionary labors under Mary's patronage, for it was up to her to protect her Son's interests in this faraway land.

On Sunday, the feast of the Holy Name, the whole parish was astir. It was a gala day for St. Alphonse's. The bells which had been silent for months rang out jubilantly to summon the hundred families of the parish to divine service. Many went to confession and received Holy Communion; nearly all remained for a solemn high Mass and then stayed on for afternoon devotions. It was the happiest event they had known and were to know for many a day.

During the ensuing weeks Father Brunner established himself and his community in truly monastic fashion in the small rectory. Every bit of space had to be utilized to provide separate rooms for kitchen, refectory, study, dormitory, and parlor, as required by the Rule. Beds were placed, berthlike, two or three on top of each other. Chairs and tables, the handiwork of the Brothers, were fashioned to fit in where they were needed. In the spring work was begun in garden and field. Soon all had settled down to a busy life of prayer, study, and manual labor in strict accordance with the Rule. They were almost as content in their narrow quarters as they had been in the spacious castle at Loewenberg.[4]

When everything was running smoothly in the tiny monastery at St. Alphonse's, Father Brunner struck out with a companion on a scouting tour to get the lay of the land. Nine miles west of Tiffin, Ohio, he came upon a flourishing German settlement which had formerly been called Wolfscreek, after a little brook which made its way through this wooded tract of virgin soil. Most of the inhabitants were immigrants from Baden. The Schlinders, Weisenbergers, Sanders, and Houcks, who were the first to come over in 1833, had been later joined by a larger party of settlers. They renamed the place New Riegel after their native town, Riegel, in Baden.

Father Brunner found one hundred and thirty families, their homes scattered through the woods like so many hermitages. None of them, however, was more than eight miles from the tiny log church which the settlers had erected in 1839 in honor of their national patron, St. Boniface. Though one of the largest, it was also one of the most neglected parishes in the district. Never fortunate enough to have a pastor of their own, the people were deprived for long intervals of the comforts of religion — a circumstance that tended to deepen their appreciation of the Faith and of the means of salvation. On hearing of the arrival of the missionaries they were filled with joy; they begged that at least one of the Fathers would remain in their midst.[5]

Touched by the evident sincerity of these simple-hearted folk and by their great hunger for the practices of religion, Father Brunner chose this site in preference to St. Alphonse's for a permanent mission house. He bought sixty[6] acres of arable land and made plans for a residence and chapel, designed for the use of the priests and students. Early in spring he sent several Brothers to carry out the plans of construction. There was no material at hand save the trees of the virgin forest, but the grateful farmers willingly lent their aid in felling and squaring the timber and hauling it to a clearing where work on the structure was soon begun. Under the careful supervision of the Brothers the building progressed — rapidly during the balmy spring days and more slowly during the sweltering heat of the summer.[7]

Meanwhile the students and priests who remained at St. Alphonse's, when not engaged in spiritual duties, were dividing their time between study and work in the fields. But life in those pioneer days was extremely hard and to some it proved altogether unbearable. As a result one of the young priests, Father Martin Bobst, left the struggling community and placed himself under the direct jurisdiction of the bishop. In a few months another of the group, Father John Baptist Jacomet, was to follow his example.[8] The rest carried on as best they could.

The "hermitess," who lived but a mile away, proved a real friend in need. With all her sixty years she was still active: farming her plot of eight acres, milking her two cows, assisting her neighbor as doctor, teacher, and notary. She supplied the Fathers with milk and with vegetables from her garden. Hearing about the Sisters at Loewenberg, she knew no rest until measures were taken to have them brought over to America. Her house, her land, everything she possessed, she said, stood at their disposal. Their life of perpetual adoration before the Blessed Sacrament especially appealed to her; their continual prayer would call down blessings on the Ohio missions. Besides they could teach the children of the widely dispersed families, who were in dire need of religious instruction. She wrote to Bishop Purcell and received his hearty approval.[9]

Accordingly, three Sisters, accompanied by Maximilian Homburger, who later became a priest, arrived in July: Mother Mary Ann Albrecht, Sister Rosalie, her daughter and another novice, Sister Martina Disch. After weeks of delay in Rotterdam they had sailed direct to New York, already a bustling seaport. Total strangers, they were lost in the great city until a certain Father Zacharias Kunze received them as guests in his house. He looked after their baggage, bought their tickets, and saw them off to Buffalo. After another stretch of wearisome travel they reached St. Alphonse's at dawn on July 22, the feast of St. Mary Magdalene, just as several of the priests were vesting for Holy Mass. The first act of the Sisters was significant: entering the church, they assisted at the Holy Sacrifice, the offering of the Precious Blood which they had traversed thousands of miles to adore and to make fruitful in souls in this wilderness.

Father Brunner welcomed them with fatherly kindness and tried to make them as comfortable as circumstances would permit. The "hermitess" had a small hut near her own in readiness for them. In this primitive abode they found scarcely the bare necessities of life, but they had expected no more and were content with the rough, homemade furniture and scanty fare which the backwoods yielded. They embraced the hardships and privations of their new life with joy, for they realized that such must be the lot of all real missionaries.[10]

On August 4, less than a fortnight after their arrival, Bishop Purcell, making an episcopal tour of his extensive diocese, paid them a visit. Had a great king deigned to enter their poor little dwelling, they could not have felt more honored. He gave them a smiling welcome that came straight from his warm Irish heart and encouraged them to extend their educational activities to the western section of his diocese, where the need of Catholic schools was imperative. Then he imparted to them his paternal blessing—"a blessing so efficacious," wrote Mother Mary Ann later, "that throughout that winter we did not seem to feel in the least the cold, the hunger, and the other petty miseries to which man's life here on earth is prone." [11] The sympathy of the bishop must have gone out to that lone trio (two of them but frail girls in their teens) as they knelt for his parting blessing in their forlorn surroundings. At his suggestion the buildings at New Riegel, which had been intended for the men's community, were now destined to serve as a convent and chapel of perpetual adoration for the Sisters.[12]

Work on these new buildings had advanced so far that they were under roof, but the carpentry work on the interior was far from completed. Since the bishop was due in the near future for Confirmation and also for the dedication of the convent and chapel, every effort was put forth to make at least part of the building habitable. But he arrived sooner than they expected. On August 15, the feast of the Assumption, he entered the town, clad in full episcopal attire, and the whole parish went forth to escort him in grand style to the church. Bishop Purcell, astonished and pleased by this unique reception, wrote the following account of it for the *Catholic Telegraph:*

> On the Feast of the Assumption, we were met some distance from the parish church of St. Boniface, Seneca

> County, Ohio, by the entire congregation, led by their faithful pastor, the Very Reverend M. F. S. Brunner and the Reverend Messrs. Kreusch and Kohler. They came with dais and sacred banners, amid the zealous chanters, singing the praises of God in Latin. We were surprised and delighted at the number and appearance of the youths, as well as to note the increased membership of the congregation under these priests. There were seventy-eight in the class to be confirmed.
>
> The Congregation of Religious temporarily located at St. Alphonse's has built here an oratory much larger than the small parish church. They erected also a convent and a school to be occupied by Religious ladies of the same order, who are devoted to prayer and the instruction of young girls. A professed Religious and two novices have already arrived from Europe for this purpose.
>
> Brothers of the Society with the aid of the Catholics of the territory erected the buildings without the expenditure of a single cent for labor or materials.[13]

That night the bishop insisted on sleeping in the half-finished convent, although every room was without flooring, doors, and windows. "Necessity is the mother of invention." Boards were hastily thrown over the beams to serve as a floor; all the drapes that could be procured from the neighbors were used as hangings for the walls and curtains for openings at doors and windows; two beds were borrowed and made for the night. Here the bishop lay down contentedly amid his flock, their pastor acting as his chamberlain and chief bodyguard.[14] This housewarming given by the gentle bishop himself in the first real home of the Sisters in America was a mark of the fullest approbation of the good work they were soon to begin. May not the blessing he left have been the first in a long chain of blessings that have since descended on the cradle of the community?

While awaiting the completion of their new home the Sisters had much to do at St. Alphonse's. The motto, *Ora et labora,* was carried out in the true Benedictine spirit, and they were soon digging potatoes and praying the rosary as heartily as they had ever done at Loewenberg. But pioneer life was hard even on those of robust constitution. The delicate health of young Sister Rosalie gave way under its rigors and she lay in a high fever for several weeks. She recovered, however, and before long was instructing each Sunday a class of little girls in the catechism. On one occasion she was godmother to an American woman who had been converted to the Faith, and who afterward remained with the Sisters.[15]

News of the arrival of the Sisters, the first religious in the eastern section of Ohio, gradually spread among the widely dispersed settlers of neighboring parishes. Before long, even as remote a place as Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, heard of the new community and asked for a foundation in that city. From there, on September 10, came one of the first American candidates, Catherine Pistorius, who received the name Sister Xavier. Others from nearby places followed and by the end of October their number had increased to seven.

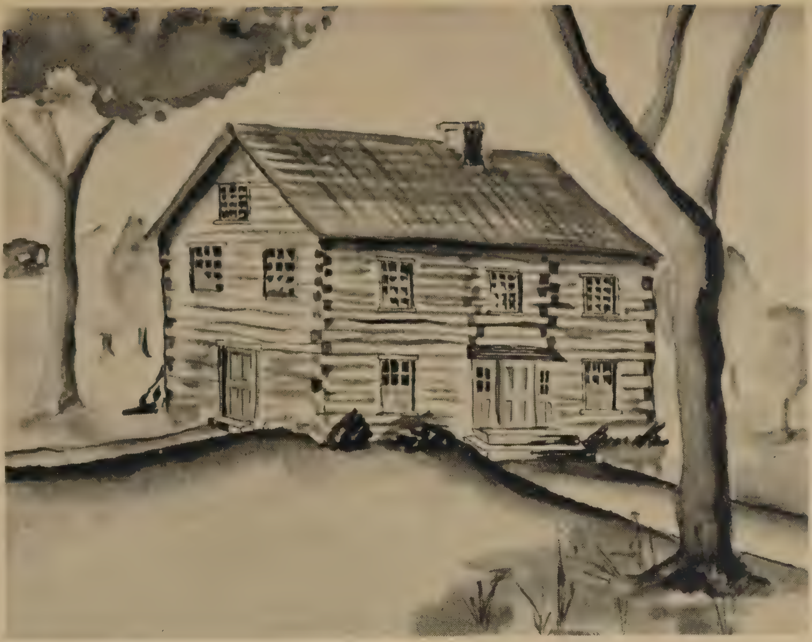
The small dwelling in which the Sisters had taken up their temporary abode could scarcely house the growing community. Besides, the roughly hewn logs and squared timber in the walls and roof had been hastily put together and were scant protection against the snow and wintry blasts that entered through the gaps. If the Sisters actually arose at night to keep the hours of adoration in the parish church, as some accounts state, they must have done so at the greatest risk to health and safety. They had to walk a half-mile to the church and the nights were extremely cold. Certainly they could not have kept nocturnal adoration regularly at St. Alphonse's. Father Brunner's own words corroborate this statement. In October he wrote to Loewenberg: "The Sisters cannot make the night hours yet."[16] In another letter a little later: "Let us hope that the new house and church will soon be ready for occupancy so that we can begin nocturnal adoration and school before Christmas."[17] Anxiously, therefore, were the Sisters biding the time until they could carry out the chief purpose that had brought them to the

New World — perpetual adoration before the Blessed Sacrament to make the Precious Blood fruitful in countless immortal souls.

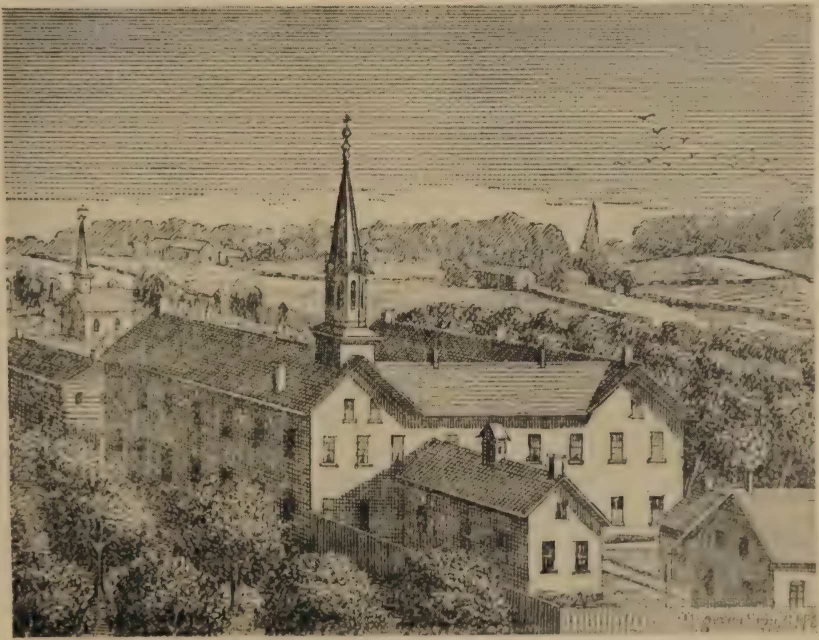
Word came at last for the Sisters, whose number had by this time increased to ten, to move into their convent at New Riegel. Six of them loaded their goods and chattels on a large farm wagon, bundled themselves up for the cold ride over forty-five miles of frozen mud roads, and said goodbye to St. Alphonse's. At four o'clock on Sunday afternoon, three days before Christmas, their teams pulled wearily into New Riegel just as Father Brunner was in the act of blessing two new bells for the chapel: one in honor of St. Joseph and the other in honor of St. Rose of Lima. "Oh, how great was our joy," wrote Mother Mary Ann Albrecht to the Sisters at Loewenberg, "when a few moments after our arrival we heard the sweet sound of the newly consecrated bells — the first in the vicinity! How great was our joy when we joined the people in prayer and accompanied Father Brunner in procession as he carried the Most Blessed Sacrament into our little chapel! We followed the Divine Son for the first time into this house; He it was Who led us, His unworthy handmaids, into it."[18]

The arrangement of the chapel was unique. To insure cloistral privacy for the Sisters a double altar stood in the center of the building, which was in effect two chapels: one for the Brothers and the laity, the other for the Sisters. Since the tabernacle opened on both sides, Holy Mass could be celebrated and Holy Communion distributed in either chapel. Here on that memorable date, December 22, 1844, the Sisters knelt in adoration to receive the blessing of the Church upon the labor of love they were about to begin. After Benediction they entered their new home, a frame building three stories high, where they made the most urgent preparations for the night.

On Christmas Eve, shortly before midnight, the bells rang out from the chapel tower, awakening echoes in the slumbering forest and making the still, crisp air vibrant with their joyous peal. Like the shepherds of old, they came to a new Bethlehem



"CRADLE" OF THE COMMUNITY, NEW RIEGEL, OHIO



SECOND CONVENT BUILDING, NEW RIEGEL, OHIO

— the simple country folk from their lowly cabins, the Sisters from their convent — to find a stable and a manger. The chapel indeed resembled a stable — so cold and bare and rough-looking with its unfinished walls and benches — but the mellow light of the candles suffused everything with a soft glow, adding warmth and cheer to the scene. Under the high altar was a crude representation of the crib, fashioned by the hands of Father Joachim Fasser. The sight of the crib together with the strains of *Stille Nacht* served to carry the rugged pioneers in spirit back to their old home and caused many an unbidden tear to flow. There was a solemn high Mass, a sermon by Father Brunner, row upon row of communicants. Nothing like this ever before at Wolfscreek! It was the Sisters' first Christmas in America.

After services several Sisters remained to begin their vigils before the Eucharistic Christ-child. It was a solemn hour — this first one that inaugurated their nocturnal adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, which was to continue unbroken throughout the years to come. Very appropriately Father Brunner dedicated the chapel to Mary at the Crib, for it was with Mary at the crib that the Sisters on that Christmas Eve of 1844 took up their post of adorers of her Divine Child.[19] New Riegel convent has been rightly called "The Cradle of the Congregation of the Precious Blood in America."

Although they now enjoyed more spacious quarters, the poverty of the Sisters was accentuated by the bareness of the big rooms which they were unable to furnish. There were stoves only in the chapel and the kitchen. The large stone oven, which had been built into the wall of the community room, helped to keep the inmates warm during the day. At first, for lack of dishes, they were obliged to eat their cornmeal and potatoes (staple winter foods) from the kettles; often the Sisters went without bread so that the priests and the orphans whom they had undertaken to support out of their slender means might not go hungry.

Father Brunner, the superior and spiritual director, was assiduous in caring for the spiritual needs of the Sisters. His motto was: All for the love of God and for the release of the poor souls. The little talks he was wont at times to address to the community in the refectory were filled with unction, and the Sisters, inflamed anew with the love of God, forgot the rigors of monastic discipline made doubly austere by primitive conditions, and heroically applied themselves to their duties of work and prayer.[20] At times they felt keenly the pangs of homesickness and longed to see the Alpine country again. One day Father Brunner overheard a Sister remark: "There is only one Loewenberg in the whole wide world." With a clever play of words he rejoined: "There is not much difference between lions [Loewenberg] and wolves [Wolfscreek]. Like lions and wolves we must fight sin and wickedness and become terrible to Satan."[21]

Soon began the apostolic work of the Sisters among the children. The Sunday after Christmas forty little girls came for religious instruction, which was thenceforth imparted by one of the Sisters each Sunday.[22] Before long a convent school was opened with Sister Rosalie teaching the three R's to a class of eight little country girls.[23] This marked the beginning of Catholic rural education in north-central Ohio. Sister Salesia Weisenberger, an American candidate, became in time her colleague in this work.

The membership of the community continued to increase. in January two young girls of pioneer families sought admittance. One of these, Mary Grimmer, the fourteen-year-old daughter of a wealthy farmer (*der reiche Grimmer*) of St. Alphonse's parish, was to become Sister Christina, a leader in the field of education. Our Lady's feast, February 2, brought a group of immigrants from Europe, the majority of whom joined the community. Among the fifteen young girls who presented themselves as candidates was Rosalia Goldschmid, who was to be the first Sister in America to receive officially the title of Mother. Andrew Kunkler, who was to succeed Father Brunner as provincial, was also in the party.[24]

The wayworn travelers had a story of adventure to tell which matched the experiences of any one of the brethren who had preceded them into the wilds of Ohio. From Cincinnati they had made their way laboriously on large farm wagons. They would engage a vehicle to take them to a certain point; then unloading their baggage, they would seek the services of another drayman to carry them a little further on their journey over formidable stretches of difficult roads. One day when they were nearing their destination, the path led through a dense woods which was almost impassable. The tired horses kept plodding along so slowly that the driver's patience was at length worn to a frazzle. Suddenly he whipped up the lagging team, which plunged forward with such a jolt that passengers and baggage were thrown together in confusion. Young Kunkler and his companion, Engelbert Ruf, fell into a fit of laughter. This so enraged the farmer that he halted on the spot, dumped trunks and luggage to the ground (the astonished passengers had meanwhile alighted), and drove off with a curse. There they sat, twenty or more of them, the women weeping, the men consulting together. They were miles from any farmhouse and not one knew which direction to take to go in search of help. The responsibility for procuring aid finally devolved upon the two troublemakers, who after a weary tramp and with much difficulty succeeded at last in hiring a teamster to haul the party some distance farther on their way. Fortunately they met one of the Brothers with a wagon and a yoke of oxen on the road to New Riegel, and he very obligingly brought them in safety to their journey's end.[25]

By June, 1845, the membership of the Sisters of the Precious Blood in America had increased to twenty-five. This rapid growth was one of the considerations that induced Father Brunner to make over to the Sisters' community the new foundation which he had begun that spring at Thompson, Ohio. This little village had likewise been settled by German colonists, brought to America on the wave of immigration about 1830. They too had been visited from time to time by itinerant missionaries: Father Tschenhens, the Redemptorist pastor of St. Alphonse's; Father Junker, of Canton; Father Joseph P. Macheboeuf, of Sandusky. In 1839 the people had erected a log church, which Bishop Purcell later dedicated to the honor of St. Michael. As most of them were devout Catholics, they longed to have a resident pastor and had been one of the first parishes on the arrival of the Precious Blood missionaries to ask for a priest to administer to their spiritual needs.[26]

For some time Father Brunner had been contemplating the erection of a mission house among these peace-loving people for the convenience of his priests. It was impossible for the missionaries to make the distance from St. Alphonse's to New Riegel and back in a single day; hence they were obliged to spend the night with private families in Thompson, which was midway between the two missions. The people were most obliging, especially an old Mr. Glasner, who lived near the church and always kept a spare room ready against the arrival of a missionary or, on rare occasions, of the bishop himself. But for his young, inexperienced priests Father Brunner perceived that the practice was fraught with danger and might lead to unpleasant consequences.

He therefore purchased a farm of eighty acres near the church, half of the plot being arable land on which stood an old log house. Thither he sent five Brothers to build a convent and chapel under the direction of a hired contractor. On the feast of Pentecost the cornerstone was laid and every hope was entertained that divine services could be held in the chapel by the feast of Our Lady's Nativity, September 8.

Early in the summer Mother Mary Ann with several Sisters went to Thompson to take over the domestic affairs and to help in garden and field. Until the convent was completed, they lived in the old log house on the premises, where they washed and cooked, hoed and harrowed, praying a blessing all the while on the kindly parishioners of St. Michael's, of whom Father

Brunner could say with confidence, "I have no fear for the Sisters as long as these good people live."[27] They were as generous in supplying the religious with provisions as they were in aiding them with the buildings.

Meanwhile, Mother Mary Ann's place as superior at New Riegel was filled by her daughter, Sister Rosalie, who was certainly very young to shoulder such a responsibility. "All obey her," wrote Father Brunner to Loewenberg, "as children do a mother, and God gives her the grace to direct them with prudence." Further on in the same letter he adds: "The Sisters are all very much contented and, for the most part, well. They busily wield the hoe as well as the ax, but even more diligently, the rosary. In Wolfscreek the adoration has not been interrupted for a single hour during the night since its beginning. In Thompson it cannot be fully introduced until the chapel is finished."[28]

At the end of the summer of 1845 Sister Rosalie must have been recalled to St. Alphonse's to conduct school there.[29] Two Sisters remained with her during that school year, as appears from a statement of Father Brunner: "In St. Alphonse's there are only three [Sisters]; Sister Rosalie is in charge there."[30] Her place as superioress in Wolfscreek was taken by Sister Barbara Schneider, who had come from Europe in the course of the year 1845.[31]

Loewenberg continued to add its quota to the American missions. In August two "good souls" came from the castle — Sister Johanna Gruenfelder and Sister Lucy Joos — each to play an important role in the young, struggling community. They brought with them a priceless gift which the community treasures to this day: a case containing relics of the saints honored on each day of the year.[32] What the first impressions of these European Sisters were, we have no record to show, but there is every reason to believe that they readily adapted themselves to pioneer life on the Ohio plains, which was so different from the long-established customs of their Swiss mountain home.

To insure accommodations for the new members who were continually asking for admittance, work was pushed ahead as much as possible on the convent building at Thompson. By September 22 the chapel was so far completed that Holy Mass could be offered for the first time. In accordance with the custom he had begun of placing all the chapels of the community under the patronage of Our Lady, Father Brunner dedicated this one under the title of Mary of the Angels. But there were delays and more delays in the carpentry work in the interior of the convent so that it was December before the Sisters could finally move in. The feast of St. Nicholas, December 6, marked the beginning of perpetual adoration in the second American convent of the Congregation.[33]

By the end of the year 1845, the Community of the Precious Blood was well established in north-central Ohio.

Chapter II

FOUNDATIONS IN WESTERN OHIO

AS EARLY as 1833 western Ohio gave promise of a vigorous Catholic life among the thrifty German immigrants who had settled there. Scarcely had they built a shelter over their heads and provided sustenance for themselves from the soil when they gave expression to their deep-rooted faith by raising aloft one church after another to the glory of God. Beginning at Minster, the mother parish of the district, which had its log church as early perhaps as 1834, the traveler going westward would have come upon five filial churches, all erected within the space of a few years.[1]

It was historic ground upon which these pioneers reared their homes and temples. Only a few short decades before, it had still been the hunting ground of the red man, whom the whites were to meet in many a bitter struggle before the savages would be finally driven out.

General Harmar, Brigadier General of the Northwest Territory, had made an unsuccessful campaign against the Indians in 1790. Elated by their complete victory at Maumee Ford, the Algonquin tribes confederated under Little Turtle, chief of the Miamis, Blue Jacket, chief of the Shawnees, and Buch-ong-e-helos, chief of the Delawares, and swore to drive the white man beyond the Ohio River, which they considered the boundary of their territory. They were instigated to this by the notorious white renegade, Simon Girty, whose very name spelt horror to women and children. In the following year Washington sent General St. Clair to meet the savages and make the Territory "safe from tomahawk and scalping knife." Marching from Fort Washington (Cincinnati) with a small, ill-equipped army, he advanced northward, building forts as he went. Tecumseh, famous Shawnee chief, was sent as spy to watch and report his every move. General St. Clair's army encamped early in November, 1791, on a little branch of the Wabash River in what is now Mercer County. Here near the present site of Fort Recovery at sunrise on November 4, a fierce battle ensued which ended "with the most terrible reverse the American arms ever suffered from the Indians."

It was left for General Wayne, nicknamed "Mad Anthony," to break the power of the red man in Ohio forever. The Indians knew that they had no ordinary foe in him. "Wayne," they said, "we cannot surprise, for he is a chief who never sleeps." The wary general led his well-drilled army north, built forts at Greenville and Recovery, met the Indians on the Maumee River, and completely routed them in the Battle of Fallen Timbers on August 20, 1794. During the summer of the following year General Wayne, with admirable tact and sagacity, induced the chiefs of the principal Indian tribes that had warred against him to sign the famous Treaty of Greenville, which put an end to red-man hostilities in this part of the state. One important result of the treaty was an immediate increase of the white population in Western Ohio.[2]

From this section Mercer County, named after General Hugh Mercer, a hero of the Revolution, was erected in 1820. Colonization was slow at first, until a wave of immigration in the early thirties brought a large number of staunch German colonists into the district. By their industry and perseverance they soon converted this swampy wilderness into a little paradise of bearded wheat and tassled corn fields.[3]

In 1831, Stallotown, just within the boundary line of Auglaize County, was settled by a colony of Germans from Muenster, Westphalia, under the leadership of Franz Joseph Stallo. The little town sprang into immediate importance because of its location on the Miami Canal, which had just been completed between Toledo and Cincinnati and which connected Minster, as the town was called later, with other important points in the state. Father William Horstmann stopped here in 1833 on his way to Putnam County, where with some of his countrymen he was going to establish a mission. To the inexpressible joy of the inhabitants, who were all Catholics, he lingered long enough at Minster to say Holy Mass and administer the sacraments. He left with the promise to return to them at intervals and look after their spiritual needs. In another year the people of Minster had built their own log church, which bore in a few years several filial parishes in the vicinity, where groups of Germans had likewise settled. By 1836 Minster had its resident pastor, Father Francis Bartels, who also attended St. John's, six miles to the west, as long as he was able.[4]

Convent of Mary, Help of Christians
Maria Stein, 1846

At the request of Bishop Purcell, Father Brunner, accompanied by the little Hollander, Father John Van den Broeck, paid a visit to this promising portion of the Lord's vineyard in the fall of 1845 to discover what prospects there were for founding a mission house there. At St. John's he came upon a peaceable, well-disposed congregation with a church, a school, a teacher, but no pastor. (Father Bartels' health had meanwhile failed because of his overtaxing labors, and he was forced to confine his pastoral work to the parish at Minster.)

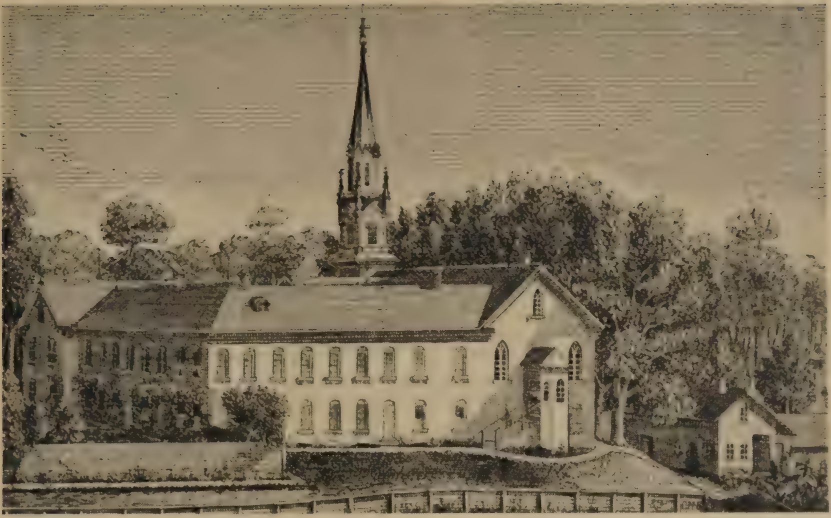
Sister M. Regina Reichert, who was a little girl at the time and whose father was the schoolmaster at St. John's, gives an interesting account of the welcome accorded the two priests on this occasion:

> All the people were overjoyed when they heard that the missionaries of the Precious Blood were coming, and they hastened into the little church to await with eager expectation the arrival of these great lords. Suddenly there was a

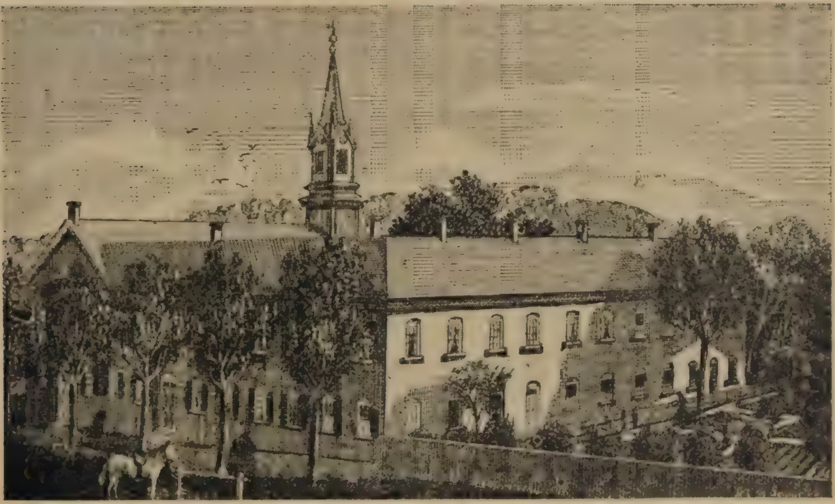
> murmur. We children sat straddling the benches to get a good look at the missionaries. Then Father Brunner and Father John entered, the former wearing clumsy wooden shoes. They knelt on the altar steps; Father de Sales intoned the litany of Loreto and prayed the acts of faith, hope, and charity just as they are still prayed each evening in the community. Afterwards he stamped on the floor with his wooden shoes as a sign that we might go home. He then entered into consultation with the trustees of the parish.[5]

There was a bit of strategy connected with the acquisition of the land near St. John's, upon which he intended to build a new convent. Mr. Herschfeld, a bigoted non-Catholic, owned a farm consisting of sixty acres of partly cultivated land near the church. Father Brunner was eager to purchase the plot but was advised that the owner would never sell it to a Catholic priest. One of the parishioners, Mr. Christian Stelzer, offered to purchase the land at low cost by representing it to be for a very good friend of his, a man of slender means. The owner readily assenting, Father Brunner came into possession of a desirable piece of land, while the parish became rid of an undesirable neighbor. Mr. Herschfeld, on learning of the assignment of his property, became angry and endeavored to recall the transaction. Needless to say, his efforts proved vain. He was present, however, at the laying of the cornerstone of the new building on November 16, 1845, on which occasion he wept bitterly because his beautiful estate had fallen to the lot of such "infamous" people.[6]

Father John Van den Broeck was placed in charge of the building operations. The parishioners of St. John's willingly lent their aid so that before the winter set in, much progress had been made on the convent and chapel, which were designed for the use of the Sisters. By the following fall both buildings were ready for occupancy. Father Brunner dedicated the chapel under the title of Mary, Help of Christians, and called the convent Maria Stein in memory of the Swiss Benedictine con-



Former Motherhouse, Maria Stein, Ohio



Old Convent of the Visitation, Minster, Ohio

vent of that name. Above the altar in the new chapel he placed the treasured picture *Maria im Stein* to which Bishop Purcell had ascribed their miraculous escape from shipwreck in the English Channel.[7]

On September 24, 1846, eight Sisters entered Maria Stein to begin that very night perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Of these Sister Lucy Joos was appointed superioress, and Sister Albertina Schleinzer directress of the girls' school that was soon afterward opened at St. John's. Sister Albertina immediately won the children by her motherly kindness and solicitude. Mother Mary Ann Albrecht was also among the pioneers at Maria Stein, but she was soon to be sent on an important mission.[8]

* * * *

The opening of a third convent resulted in a shortage of help on the large farms connected with each house of the community. In 1847 there were only eight Brothers in all to do the jobs that required a man's strength; the rest of the heavy field work devolved upon the Sisters. Most of these were young girls, ill-suited to the hard labor that pioneer life exacted. Death already had taken toll of three lives, which all too soon had been laid on the altar of sacrifice.[9] American candidates had been admitted from time to time, but they were few and far between.

In consideration of these facts, Father Brunner sent Mother Mary Ann Albrecht to Europe at the beginning of the year 1847 to enlist candidates for the American convents. Her mission proved successful, for the following June brought a group of twenty-three persons to America: thirteen young women and ten young men. Mother Mary Ann remained abroad until the next March (1848); on May 20 she returned with twenty-seven more members for the sisterhood and eight Brothers. Among the recruits were Sister Kunigunda Wehrle, who had entered at Loewenberg ten years before, and Mother Mary Ann's own husband, Joseph Albrecht, who had finally reached the decision to quit the world and join his old friend and spiritual adviser, Father Brunner, in his quest for souls.[10]

For the Albrechts, their arrival in Ohio was an occasion of deep sorrow. Their only daughter, Sister Rosalie, had died of consumption the previous October[11] during her mother's absence. The simple white cross that marked her grave at New Riegel was all that greeted them at their coming. To her father especially, who had been yearning to see his daughter again, her untimely death was a severe blow; to the community it was an irretrievable loss. Though only twenty years of age, she had already evinced a wisdom and prudence far beyond her years, and these qualities had been combined with a remarkable intelligence and a childlike piety that gave promise of a fruitful career as a teacher.

The large number of recruits that Mother Mary Ann was instrumental in bringing from Europe were distributed among the three convents that had thus far been erected. That same year, 1848, circumstances led to the founding of another convent in northwestern Ohio.

CONVENT OF MARY AT THE HOLY SEPULCHER
GLANDORF, OHIO, 1849

Father William Horstmann, with fourteen of his countrymen from Westphalia, had settled in Putnam County in January, 1834, and there founded the village of Glandorf. He immediately bought a large tract of land (about 500 acres) from the Government at the price of $1.25 per acre. A log building was soon erected to serve temporarily as church, school, and rectory. Here on Easter Sunday, 1834, Holy Mass was celebrated for the first time. As more and more immigrants arrived, a frame church of larger dimensions, which even boasted a modest steeple, was put up in 1836.

Though he was well past middle age when he first came to Glandorf, Father Horstmann was not content with shepherding his own small flock; each month he went on foot to Minster, Petersburg, and Wapakoneta to administer to the German inhabitants who were without a pastor. When his health became impaired by such strenuous journeyings he was obliged to apply for an assistant. Father Boehne came to his aid in 1841, and upon the death of Father Horstmann in 1843, became pastor. He in turn became so broken in health that he was forced to resign five years later.

Meanwhile, Father Amadeus Rappe, a staunch friend of the Precious Blood missionaries from the beginning, was appointed first Bishop of the See of Cleveland, Ohio, erected in 1847. At his request the Fathers of the Precious Blood preached a mission at St. John's Church, Glandorf, during Easter week of the following year, and subsequently took over full charge of this large, flourishing parish.

Father Brunner at once inaugurated an extensive building program in the locality. With an eye for a good bargain he first purchased a plot of 120 acres three miles west of the village, where he intended to erect a mission house or a school of some sort. But the people were clamoring for Sisters to open a girls' school in the parish, not out in the wilderness. He therefore bought five acres near the church, and in a short time a convent was building, similar in plan to those previously erected in other parts of the state.

That same fall (1848) seven Sisters came to open the school and to look after the needs of the Brothers engaged in constructing the convent. The temporary abode of the Sisters was a small log hut presented to them by the village blacksmith.

The following summer the new convent — a two-storied frame building with a roomy chapel on the first floor — was ready for occupation. On July 2, twenty Sisters began perpetual adoration in the chapel, newly dedicated to the Sorrowful Mother under the title of Mary at the Holy Sepulcher.[12] Here for over sixty years went up an unbroken hymn of praise that brought richest blessings upon "Little Germany," as Glandorf was later nicknamed.

CONVENT OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOOD COUNSEL
MARIA-CAMP, OHIO, 1850

The one hundred and twenty acres of land which Father Brunner had previously purchased outside of Glandorf did not remain fallow long. It was a pleasant, secluded spot almost entirely girdled by the River Blanchard — an ideal location for a convent. In another twelvemonth a log building stood on the place — a poor little dwelling at first, annexed to a tiny chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Good Counsel. But it served the purpose of housing the King of kings and His faithful bodyguard until it could be replaced a few years later (1852) by a more substantial building of brick.[13]

* * * *

The next seven years (1850-1856) witnessed a rapid expansion of the community in western Ohio, which became in a short time a veritable "holy land." Convent after convent arose to testify to the piety and zeal of the master builder, Father Brunner, and to the tireless industry of his toiling brethren. There was no hostile government to thwart his plans and no envious clergy to deter him from his labors. Land could be had at a low price, building material was abundant, help was willingly proffered by the grateful inhabitants. The reasons for Father Brunner's choice of a multiplicity of small convents in preference to several large establishments lay in his firm conviction that frequent change of abode was essential to the spiritual life — it kept one's heart free and detached — and in his desire to carry out as a dutiful son the dying wish of his pious mother: to introduce the practice of perpetual adoration into as many places as possible.[14]

CONVENT OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD
GREENWOOD, OHIO, 1850

On one of his missionary journeys in the early fall of 1849, Father Brunner was attracted to a lovely grove of green trees rising gently on a grassy knoll a stone's throw from Mary's Chapel (Cassella), a filial church of St. Rose's, which was organized in 1847. The scene recalled another green wood dear to his heart in faraway Alsace, where he had endeavored, with little success, to establish the Sisters and their orphan charges. Without further ado he bargained for the purchase of the eighty acres of woodland, which he called Greenwood in memory of the scene of his early missionary labors. But there was another reason for his choice of the name. Gruenenwald in Alsace had been sanctified by the presence of the holy priest and martyr, John Baptist Bochele, who had been killed during the French Revolution. There at the shrine of the Mother of God Father Bochele had often said Mass, preached the word of God, and heard confessions. Later Father Brunner's soul had been stirred to the depths as he offered the Holy Sacrifice at the very same altar.[15] He became interested in the writings of the saintly priest and eventually published several of his works, among them his splendid *Christian Rule of Life.*[16]

His mind filled with such memories, Father Brunner dedicated the new chapel, which was completed in the fall of 1850, to the Mother of God. Here Mass was offered for the first time on All Souls' Day. It was a memorable occasion. Early in the morning the Sisters came fasting in procession from Maria Stein. They were escorted by two children carrying a beautiful picture of the Mother of God, a gift of Abbot Placidus, while Father Brunner and Father John Wittmer, both on horseback, brought up the rear. Entering the small log chapel, Father Wittmer celebrated a Requiem High Mass, Father Brunner and the Sisters forming the choir. The building was packed with curious spectators from Cassella and other neighboring parishes, who had come tagging along in the wake of the unusual parade. In a short, spirited sermon, Father Brunner encouraged these interested neighbors to come to the aid of the Sisters in their poverty. The morning ceremonies were brought to a close with the religious profession of Sister Genevieve Benkert and Sister Bridget Meyer. That night Sister Martha Hoepf, the superioress, and her ten associates began perpetual adoration before the Blessed Sacrament.[17]

CONVENT OF THE VISITATION OF MARY
MINSTER, OHIO, 1852

The next year brought another convent, at Minster. A foundation probably would have been made here at an earlier date, had not certain circumstances intervened.

Three Sisters had gone to Minster from Maria Stein in the fall of 1848 to take charge of the girls' school, which had been combined with the boys' school under the able management of a lay teacher, Mr. Schemmel. In the trio was Sister Adelaide Schmerge, a former public-school teacher of Buffalo, New York, who had entered the community a short time previously. Since the Sisters had no house of their own, they were forced to room with a private family. Much inconvenience and unpleasantness was connected with their stay there. It seems that some of the people were opposed to having the Sisters teach, but Father Brunner was just as determined that they remain and continue the good work which involved the salvation of innocent children. "If this work is of God," he wrote, "then God will bless it, even if the beginning is very poor and miserable."[18] But in the plan of Divine Providence they were not to remain long.

The awful plague of cholera that swept the country like wildfire in 1849 did not spare the "holy land" of western Ohio. In a short time two hundred citizens of Minster were carried off by the dread epidemic, among them the faithful schoolmaster, Mr. Schemmel. The schools were, of course, closed, and the Sisters withdrew temporarily to Maria Stein, since their services were no longer needed.

Tribute must be paid to the noble work of the missionaries of the Precious Blood during this terrible calamity. Father Maximilian Homburger, the pastor of St. Augustine's Church, Minster, remained with his stricken flock to attend the sick and the dying. For weeks he knew no respite by day or by night as, like the Good Samaritan, he went on horseback or on foot from family to family, dispensing medicine, administering the sacraments, and burying the dead. Despite his constant exposure to the disease, he was spared.[19] Similarly, Father Andrew Kunkler, pastor of St. John's, proved himself a real hero during the cholera rage. On one occasion he found in a lone log cabin a widowed mother and her only son lying sick unto death. The mother was resigned, but was much concerned about her boy's welfare, should he outlive her. Father Kunkler allayed her fears by promising to be a father to her Joseph. A few days later the woman died in peace, while her orphaned child lived to become in the providence of God a missionary of the Precious Blood and subsequently the great Bishop Dwenger, the second ordinary of Fort Wayne, Indiana.[20]

Soon after the cholera plague was over, Father Brunner bought several acres of land at Minster, where a convent, under the title of the Visitation of Mary, was begun in 1851 and completed in the fall of 1852. That year Father Andrew Kunkler became pastor at Minster. Grieved at the sight of so many children made orphans by the ravages of the cholera, he began to collect funds for the building of an orphanage and academy for girls, to be combined with the Sisters' convent. St. Mary Institute arose almost overnight.[21] Here the girls of the parish also attended school until a substantial building, St. Theresa's School, which later became the district school, was erected between the church and the convent.[22]

CONVENT OF MARY, MOTHER OF MERCY
HIMMELGARTEN, OHIO, 1852

Himmelgarten (Heavengarden) was the name Father Brunner, in a poetic mood, gave to another convent which he founded in 1852. A lovely stretch of undulating land with gardens and orchards probably suggested the name to him. Tradition has it that he was offered this large, well-cultivated farm of 520 acres, situated midway between the flourishing parishes of St. Henry and St. Joseph, at a low price by a Mr.

Himmelgarn, who believed firmly that the place was haunted. Father Brunner closed the deal to the satisfaction of both parties, ghosts notwithstanding.

By the end of April two Sisters, Sister M. Bridget Meyer and Sister M. Fridolina Hess, had established themselves in one of the log houses on the place. On the first of May, nine more Sisters arrived making it possible to begin nocturnal adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in the little chapel of Mary, Mother of Mercy, which had been annexed to their poor dwelling the previous winter. Father Joseph Albrecht was superior of the convent and pastor of St. Joseph's Church, three miles away.

In 1854, the convent, chapel, and barn were destroyed by fire, and later a more substantial building of brick took the place of the log house.[23]

MARY'S HOME[24]

JAY COUNTY, INDIANA, 1854

The first convent in America outside of Ohio was built in Jay County, Indiana, in 1854. Two hundred and forty acres of land had been bought two years previously by the Congregation on a site just within the borders of Indiana, about fifteen miles from Himmelgarten. The proximity of the latter convent had enabled the Brothers residing there to plant a part of the newly acquired land in order to provide for the builders, should the community decide to make an establishment in Indiana.

Since there was no priest available to act as superior and direct the building of the proposed foundation, the work had to be deferred for some time. Hearing of the plight of his superiors, Father Willibald Willi, a young invalid priest stationed at Maria Stein, eagerly offered his services. Though in an advanced stage of tuberculosis, he possessed a surprising reserve of youthful zest and love of adventure. From his spirit of cheerfulness and deep piety sprang the desire to get a taste of real pioneer life and keep smiling through it for the love of

God. "If my superiors only tip the wink," he exclaimed, "I'll gladly and confidently go to Indiana."[25]

Heartened by the assurance of having a resident chaplain, several Brothers set to work during the summer of 1854 to convert the log house standing on the premises into a chapel. To this they annexed a small residence destined for the Sisters. A tiny hut — a mere cell — near the chapel was provided for the priest, while a room built on to the barn was made to serve as a dormitory for the Brothers. By the middle of August the work was sufficiently advanced to permit occupation of the buildings.

August 22, the octave of the feast of the Assumption, was the date set for the exodus from Maria Stein. Two large wagons loaded with appointments for the chapel, necessary furniture, and supplies of food served also as conveyances for the four Sisters and two Brothers (three Brothers were already in Indiana) who were to start the new mission. Father Willibald came on horseback, a much more dignified and comfortable mode of travel as befitted his priestly office and state of health. Their first act on arrival that evening was to place a picture of the Sorrowful Mother on the altar of the chapel and to consecrate themselves to the service of their heavenly Queen.

The following day before Holy Mass the saintly priest addressed the Brothers, Sisters, and lay folk who had gathered for the opening celebration in words of such enduring charm and significance that they have been treasured by the community. They reveal the spirit of childlike devotion and lighthearted gayety which actuated these early members and enabled them to endure conditions which one sometimes shudders to recall.

> Never forget the designs of God in leading you to this wilderness. It is God's will that you should grow in holiness, that you should become saints, and by your exemplary lives consecrate this place so that the many who will follow after you when you will have long since journeyed to a better world will be inspired to walk in your footsteps.

> As it is your intention to convert this wilderness into a beautiful luxuriant paradise, so should you begin now with the renewed desire to serve God faithfully and live for Him alone. Just as it will be your task to root out and destroy all useless trees, shrubs, and weeds, in like manner must you endure in your hearts nothing that displeases God in the least or hinders your growth in grace.
>
> Upon you God has willed from all eternity to bestow the happiness of making a beginning here. You are the first adorers of the Precious Blood, the first children of Mary, the first lambs of the Good Shepherd to come to this wilderness. From this day on our beloved Savior will take up His abode here in the Blessed Sacrament. Yours will be the unique privilege of forming a Guard of Honor around this great King by day and by night.
>
> This large plot of land [240 acres] belongs to the Mother of God; it was bought for her and given over to her keeping. Therefore you Brothers and Sisters who are to settle here have the great good fortune to live in Mary's Home and to cultivate the land of this powerful Queen of heaven. From her you will await food and recompense, not indeed as her servants but as her beloved children. This good Mother will in future provide so well for your spiritual and temporal needs that you will want nothing.[26]

It was an impressive sermon, but much more effective was the example of this zealous young priest in carrying out in his daily life what he preached from the pulpit. He was an inspiration to the religious by his careful observance of the Rule, his childlike devotion to the Mother of God, his gentle words of admonition — which seem to have proceeded from the mouth of Eternal Wisdom Itself — and his cheerful acceptance of sickness and trial in accordance with the divine will.

There was, in fact, great need of good humor to face a cold winter with provisions low and all comfort and conveniences miles away. The store of food they had brought with them soon gave out and their newly planted gardens yielded a scant harvest. Material comforts, even the most ordinary, were lacking. Mary's Home, for instance, boasted a single chair, which was considerately assigned to the exclusive use of the sickly chaplain and was daily carried to and fro from cell to sacristy to serve his needs. "My one and only movable," he jokingly called it.[27]

By the middle of October circumstances had become so desperate that Father Willibald determined himself to go on a begging tour to relieve the wants of the community. He entered upon this task with all the joyousness and humility of a Francis of Assisi. His objectives were the more prosperous convents — Maria Stein, Greenwood, and Himmelgarten — his conveyance was a wagon and team driven by one of the Brothers.

Their first stop was at Maria Stein, where they were hospitably received and their wagon was generously loaded with provisions. "Mary's Home agrees with me," said Father Willibald on being questioned about his health. "My cough is less severe since I have taken to eating cornbread, which is much better for me than the finest, whitest wheat bread. I'm really thriving on johnny cakes."

The next morning, October 19, they made their way to Greenwood, where Sister Clara Meisen was superioress. She found great pleasure in adding to their store whatever she thought would be serviceable. "There's one more thing I need," Father Willibald called to her as they were about to drive away. "You could bring me the chair from the Spiritual Father's room. He told me this morning at Maria Stein that I may have it, although we have hitherto managed very well with only one." When Sister Clara hastened back with the coveted chair, the grateful priest sang for her amusement a merry beggar's song in his native Romansh, whereupon the Sister laughingly remarked, "I thought I just now heard your father, good old Jacob Willi, singing."[28]

The "beggars" spent that night at Himmelgarten. There they found the superioress eager to exchange some Indiana paper money, which was no longer at par value in Ohio. "Bring me all you have," said the priest with a mischievous smile. "I'm on my way to Indiana now and I can make very good use of it." He put the bills in his pocket and thanked her profusely. "May God reward you!"

"But I thought you were going to exchange them for me," she said somewhat surprised.

"You know I am a beggar and have never been a money-changer in all my life. I can use this very well for our poor Brothers and Sisters. Did you never hear in your instructions when you were a child that alms given to the poor is a much better and safer investment than money exchanged or placed at interest? God Himself will repay you."[29]

Of course he won his point and left Himmelgarten not only with money in his pocket but with his wagon piled high with more goods and provisions. There were sufficient supplies to tide them over the hard cold winter.

The exertion of even this short trip unfortunately proved fatal to the delicate health of the priest. The following day he was completely exhausted, but he managed to drag himself to the altar to offer the Holy Sacrifice. For several weeks he continued the exercise of his priestly office in spite of his wracking cough and growing weakness. On the feast of All Saints he held divine service for the lay folk in the vicinity, who from the start had been frequenting the Sisters' chapel, especially on Sundays and holydays, and he addressed them with a few words, aglow with his own ardor of soul. He exhorted them to sanctify themselves by imitating the saints of God and pointed out how each in his own station — Brothers and Sisters, parents, youth, and children — could find a model on which to mold his own life of perfection. Above all he held up Mary as the universal pattern of Christian holiness.

On Sunday, November 5, he preached his last mission sermon — a very brief one — to the religious and laity. Sitting before the altar, as he was too weak to stand, he sought for the last time to inflame his hearers with the desire to lead holy lives. After encouraging them to strive for the perfection of divine charity — love of God and their neighbor — he pleaded with them to come to the aid of the poor souls in purgatory in these memorable closing words:

> Above all, *you,* my little flock, should be merciful to these poor souls, since God has through the foundation of this new little convent shown you an extraordinary mercy, a blessing which so many thousands in America desire with desire, but in vain.
>
> You were here in this wilderness without a church, without divine service, without a priest; you were poor, very poor souls. Now the All-bountiful One has granted you all at once that which hitherto has not become the allotted portion of so many large parishes.
>
> Yea more! You have here the beginning of a convent of virgins that before the end of a year, God willing, will be occupied by a large number of Brides of Christ; here they will honor the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ, and the Virgin conceived without sin.
>
> In this desert where formerly only thistles and thorns — the punishment of original sin — were to be found, where only the howl of wolves and other wild animals was heard, the good God has placed a sweet-smelling garden of roses, where His beloved children, the inmates of the convent, cry to Him by day and by night especially in *your* behalf, and offer to the heavenly Father the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ. Rosaries innumerable are prayed here, and with the increase in the number of Sisters, still more will be prayed.
>
> You can, if you only want to, participate every morning and every evening in their divine service and solemn Benediction. In a short time, when our poor log building is completed, a greater number of Sisters will come and will keep night watch without interruption, as it has been introduced into the community. They will by their unceasing prayer draw down the blessing of God upon you and upon your children. The livelong night, year in, year out, while you are resting from your labor, the Sisters of the Precious Blood will take turns keeping vigil and calling to God for

> grace for yourselves and for your children. And indeed, when you who are now listening to me will have long since mouldered in your grave, the prayers of the Brothers and Sisters of the Precious Blood will be still following you in another land, in case you are still in need of them. Therefore see, my beloved, God has done great things unto you. Consequently the words of our beloved Savior apply to you in a very special manner when He says: "Be ye merciful as also your heavenly Father is merciful."[30]

By the middle of November Father Willibald was no longer able to say Holy Mass and had to keep to his bed almost continuously. Less than a fortnight before Christmas, weakened by frequent hemorrhages, he died as he had lived, peacefully and cheerfully, in the arms of an attendant, Brother Herman. The Brother often remarked afterward: "I wouldn't take the whole world in exchange for the privilege of witnessing the saintly death of this pious priest. Never in my life will I forget that hour. I trust that it will ever be an incentive for me to live a holy life so as to merit a good end."[31]

After Father Willibald's death Father Patrick Henneberry, the first Irishman to join the Congregation, came to Mary's Home to recuperate. He remained only a few months. Having regained his health and vigor, he was transferred to Minster early in March. He in turn was succeeded by Father John Wittmer, who directed the building of a larger and more substantial convent and chapel. In the fall of 1855 the Sisters moved into the new Mary's Home, where they continued their life of consecrated labor and prayer in honor of the Precious Blood.[32]

CONVENT OF MARY'S FLIGHT INTO EGYPT
EGYPT, OHIO, 1856

In a secluded spot midway between Maria Stein and Minster rose the last convent to be erected in the decade 1846-1856, the convent of Mary of Egypt. A small log farmhouse consisting of two rooms stood on a slight elevation of land some distance from the road. The location was well chosen. Majestic trees and sprawling underwood served as a protective screen and formed a pleasant haven for cloistered lives.

Hither on August 8, 1856, came Sister Johanna Gruenfelder and several companions from Maria Stein to make the old log cabin on the hill more habitable for the Sisters who were destined to live there until a new convent and chapel could be completed. One of the rooms was arranged for a chapel and the other was made to serve as a combination kitchen, dining room, and community room. The loft under the roof, reached by a ladder, was used as a dormitory.

Three weeks later on the feast of St. Rose, Sister Mary Ursula Hegg and her small band made their "flight into Egypt," taking up their abode temporarily in the tiny dwelling prepared for them. The Brothers who were engaged in building the new convent meanwhile enjoyed the hospitality of the kindly neighbor, a Mr. Osterloh, who also provided the Sisters with vegetables and other farm products.

By Christmas a new convent and chapel, dedicated to the honor of Mary's Flight into Egypt, was under roof. It was a substantial building of brick, destined to last over a half-century.

That first Christmas spent in Egypt was a memorable one because of the cold and the inconvenience of living in a new building without interior walls, steps, or permanent floors. Cloths were hung to separate chapel from sacristy and living rooms, but availed nothing in shutting out the biting, frosty wind that forced its entrance through every crack and crevice of the unfinished building. Father John Wittmer, who dedicated the chapel and celebrated the first midnight Mass in it, found in his surroundings a realistic Bethlehem. The setting was complete from bare rafters to open doorways. But there was no complaint: rather did the Sisters laugh in the face of such trifles; the joy of sacrifice shone on their faces; they were glad to be counted worthy to endure something for their Lord and Master, Who had deigned to build His tabernacle in their midst.

A school for girls, opened in the convent in 1859, was ably directed by Sister Hedwig Flamm for fifteen years. When it was closed, all the children of the vicinity attended the district schools, which were taught by Catholic lay teachers.

This land of Egypt became in time an earthly paradise. Flowers bloomed in profusion not only in the luxuriant gardens outside in the warm spring sunshine, but the flowers of peace, contentment, and joy in the Lord blossomed the year around in the hearts of the Sisters. The fragrance of their prayers was perceptible even to the casual visitor who might tarry in this quiet retreat, far removed from the tumult of the workaday world. One eyewitness anonymously writes of his visit to the chapel:

> There is no noise, no turmoil. Far and wide reigns a stillness as in the depths of the forest. But we do hear something: an almost uninterrupted prayer; a calling to the throne of the Most High. Wreaths are fashioned from flowers — not from flowers and leaves that soon wither and die — but they are composed of numberless acts of praise of God, of countless aspirations of "Glory to the Blood of Jesus," of thousands of "Aves," and not seldom of hymns of praise of consecrated souls. And when betimes the choir of adorers is mute, we can pay a visit before the tabernacle, for nothing disturbs us here; the regular ticking of the convent clock serves only to remind the soul of the fleetness of time.[33]

Chapter III

COMMUNITY LIFE IN PIONEER DAYS

THE rapid expansion of the Congregation of the Precious Blood in Ohio and Indiana and its ever-increasing membership involved new problems of organization. These were rendered all the more intricate by the fact that the Congregation at this time consisted of three distinct groups — priests, Brothers, and Sisters — living apart, yet subject to the same immediate authority, possessing their goods in common, and each mutually dependent on the others. Father Brunner did not have any intention of changing this arrangement, for he saw in it the ideal religious family, a perfect pattern of the Holy Family of Nazareth.

> This community should be all in all a family consisting only of children of God, of saints, who should strive as much as lies in their power to conform themselves to the Holy Family — Jesus, Mary, and Joseph — in thought, word, silence, action; in suffering, deed, and omission; in work, in clothing, and in food; in prayer, humility, poverty, chastity, and mortification; in obedience, patience, and meekness; in a word, in everything. . . . The reverend priests take the place of our Divine Savior, Jesus Christ; the Brothers, that of St. Joseph; the Sisters, that of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The members of each division know what they must do in accordance with the Rule and the orders which I give them. This arrangement should not be changed, for I believe that such is the will of God.[1]

Again calling his fertile imagination into play, he pictured the Congregation as the Theban Legion, borrowing the name of the celebrated legion under the Emperor Maximianus.[2]

The *generalissimo* was the Moderator in Rome, who sent this mighty army into America with full panoply of war to do battle against the archenemy of souls. The legion was divided into three battalions, each having its specific orders, but all three united under one banner to fight for the same cause.

The first battalion was composed of the priests, who wore the noble ensign of their all-powerful King upon their breasts. Fully equipped for the fray, they formed the company of sharpshooters who had to fight in the front ranks and receive the brunt of the enemy's attacks. At times they were also detailed to care for the wounded and to bring back the captives of war.

The battalion of Sisters, the auxiliary troops, were entrenched within the line of fortifications (their convents), where they were on sentinel duty day and night to see that the munitions were kept in repair, to observe the movements of the enemy from afar, and to supply ammunition and other supplies for carrying on the war. Above all, like Moses on the mountain, they were to stretch out their arms, "the most powerful of all weapons," in constant supplication to their great King, and not to let them fall until victory was achieved.

Between these two battalions, aiding both, was the battalion of Brothers, composed of artillery, picket, and reserve troops. Upon their loyalty, resourcefulness, and bravery depended to a great extent the final victory. Their duties were manifold: as aides and body guards of the priests, they protected them from sudden onslaught; as artillerymen, they charged from the rear to disconcert the enemy; they built up and guarded the fortifications for the auxiliary troops and tore down those of the enemy. On the battlefield in the thick of the fight or within the ramparts on sentinel duty, they shared the priests' apostolate of saving souls and the Sisters' apostolate of prayer and work.[3]

Both pictures — of the Holy Family and of the "thundering legion" — illustrate Father Brunner's power of graphic description and, though highly idealistic, serve to give some idea of the interrelation of the three groups that formerly comprised the Congregation of the Precious Blood in America. But accurate details about the mode of government within the Congregation, about the rule of life followed by the members, about their exterior occupations and inner life of prayer, must be gleaned from the numerous letters of Father Brunner addressed to the community at large or to individuals, and from various regulations that were issued from time to time.

All authority within the Congregation rested with the *directorium,* or board of directors, consisting of the provincial and two priest assistants. The provincial was responsible to the bishop of the diocese and to the Moderator General in Rome, for the proper administration of the temporal goods of the community as a corporation and for the spiritual guidance of the members of the Congregation as an ecclesiastical institute.

Father Brunner, the first provincial in America, remained head of the directorium for fifteen years. He was assisted by Fathers Anthony Meier and John Wittmer, the three forming the first governing body of the American Congregation. The residence of Father Brunner was originally at Peru, Ohio, but was transferred in 1847 to Thompson, where a brick house and chapel had been erected and dedicated to St. Aloysius to serve as a retreat house for priests and a seminary for students. From here as a center he traveled on horseback to the various convents, investigated the spiritual and temporal status of each, often directed building operations, and usually conducted the annual retreats.[4] Later when his trips abroad kept him away from home for a year or more at a time, Father Wittmer acted in his stead.

The role of superioress in the Sisters' convents was defined by Father Brunner as follows:

> The Sisters of each house have their own superioress, and a general superioress stands over all the houses. The latter is nominated by a majority of the Sisters and she is confirmed in the office by the directorium and by the bishop as long as it is their pleasure. She has, however, no authority except that which the general director expressly imparts

> to her. She serves him in the capacity of a general supervisor, whose duty it is to see that the Rule is conscientiously observed.[5]

Accordingly the superioress possessed only delegated power, and this applied even in the ordinary management of her own house. The transfer of a Sister from one house to another, and even the assignment of particular occupations to individual members, were under the general director. We find, for instance, that Father Brunner wrote from Thompson to Sister Kunigunda, superioress at Wolfscreek, on June 25, 1849:

> Four Sisters will come from here. I think three of them should go to Glandorf, namely Thais Meyer, Regula Winterhalter, and Rebecca Hercher, and one, that is, Olympia Ernst, should remain at Wolfscreek. . . . Besides these three you can send three more from Wolfscreek, whomever you choose. Sister Rosalia Goldschmid should not be sent. Sister Adelaide Schmerge will go there [Glandorf] from Minster as superioress.[6]

Although the Sister superiors possessed little authority in their own right in governing their communities, they wielded a potent influence in another direction. To them were entrusted the finances of the Congregation and to them the priests were obliged to hand over their hard-earned savings. This regulation was the cause of endless bickerings between the priests and Sisters and became the source of the bitterest complaints made against Father Brunner. But in spite of all opposition he defended his policy to the end.[7]

Sister Mary Ann Albrecht, the first superioress in America, was called "Mother" from the very day of her arrival,[8] and she seems to have retained this title until her death. Father Brunner bestowed it upon her in an unofficial way, however, for she has never been considered one of the general superioresses.[9]

As the number of convents increased, the need for greater supervision to preserve unity among the various houses became evident. Such surveillance was especially imperative during Father Brunner's prolonged absences in Europe. He therefore came to depend more and more on several Sisters of outstanding ability in whom he placed great confidence and from whom he awaited periodical reports on existing conditions in the Congregation. They were Sister Rosalia Goldschmid, superioress of Maria Stein, Sister Kunigunda Wehrle of Minster, and Sister Johanna Gruenfelder of Thompson.[10]

While Sister Rosalia is generally accredited with having been the first to receive officially the title of Mother, her charge extended only to the houses in western Ohio. That Sister Johanna was the first duly appointed Mother General is clear from a letter which Father Brunner wrote to Sister Kunigunda:

> I am sending Sister Johanna today to investigate conditions at Minster, at the same time to confer with you about all things needed and to make any regulations whatever that she deems good and useful; for daily I perceive more and more the necessity of the Sisters of all our houses being but one heart and one soul, also in external affairs. This will be impossible unless I make one Sister responsible for all our houses, one Sister whose duty it will be to investigate everything, to visit each house from time to time, and in my name to make any necessary regulations. My beloved children, among whom I number you especially, must aid me in this purpose, and accordingly you and all the other superioresses will obey Sister Johanna as you would obey me until I appoint another in her stead.[11]

This appointment of the Mother General by Father Brunner himself seems at variance with his former statement that the Sisters were to nominate their own superioress.[12] Such arbitrary measures were inevitable, however, since the early Rule provided for no constitution. In fact, Father Brunner was opposed to any form of constitutional government in the Sisters' community. On examining the Rule of the Sisters Adorers of the Most Precious Blood in Rome, he had remarked:

"Today I have seen their Rule, which provides for so many offices that it would be impracticable for our German Sisters. Their Order is subject to an aristocratic regime of women officers. Lord, may they live in peace! Amen."[13]

The Rule followed by the Sisters in America at this time was practically the same as the one that had been introduced at Loewenberg after Father Brunner's return from Albano (1838).[14] It was based on the Rule of St. Benedict and modeled after that drawn up by Blessed Gaspar for the Missionary Fathers of the Precious Blood. In 1846 Father Brunner made a slight revision of the old Rule to adapt it to conditions in America,[15] and four years later made several important additions and corrections before presenting it for approbation to the Bishop of Chur on the occasion of a visit to Switzerland in 1850.[16]

This so-called Rule was not, strictly speaking, really a rule, but a short code of asceticism, emphasizing the spirit rather than the letter of the law. It contained no constitution, no definite regulations as to the prayers to be recited, the habit to be worn, the daily *horarium* to be followed. Details regarding the manner of life of the pioneer members must be gleaned from letters and from special regulations that were made from time to time by Father Brunner for the whole community or for a particular house.

With the permission of the director, postulants could at first be admitted into any of the several houses by the superioress. Upon her entrance the candidate received a brown bonnet and her name in religion. She was placed under the guidance of some older Sister, usually the superioress herself, who instructed her several times a week in the duties of her state and imparted salutary admonitions and advice.[17] After her vocation had been tested for a year or longer, the postulant was invested with the habit and black bonnet and the novitiate or time of probation began. This lasted from one to four years, the length of time depending upon the disposition of the individual novice. If upon the recommendation of the superioress she obtained the approval of the director, the novice received the veil and took the oath of fidelity — that is, she bound herself by oath never to leave the community of her own accord and to remain faithful to it. Dispensation from this oath could be obtained only from the bishop.

The taking of the three religious vows was a privilege granted only to certain members. Those professed Sisters whom the director deemed worthy because of their evident determination to strive for the perfection of their state were admitted to the private profession of vows either temporary or perpetual.[18] The formula of profession which was used in the early days has been preserved in an original document written in German, a translation of which follows:

> I, Sister Euphemia Goldschmid, desiring, in honor of the Precious Blood of Jesus and of the Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary, to offer myself to God as a living holocaust, do here in the presence of God, before all His angels and saints, before you my fellow-Sisters and all here present, promise, profess, and vow to God to observe for the rest of my life poverty, chastity, and obedience. I make these simple vows freely and voluntarily after mature reflection. I firmly hope that God through the infinite merits of the Precious Blood and the intercession of the Mother of God will grant me the grace to observe them faithfully to the end of my life.[19]

Although all the Sisters did not make the vows, they were all required to live according to the spirit of the evangelical counsels. Perfect obedience to the director and to the superior who represented him was considered a point of vital importance in the Congregation and was exacted of all members; this, in turn, implied the practice of the other two vows.[20]

Great emphasis was placed on the observance of silence, which was enforced almost as rigorously as in a Trappist monastery. On this point Father Brunner wrote, "They are never permitted to speak except what is necessary, and at certain times no talking whatever is allowed."[21] Even the hour for general relaxation after dinner, usual in religious communities, was devoted to making the Way of the Cross in common before the arduous tasks of the afternoon were resumed. Perhaps Father Brunner's year of Trappist training accounts to some extent for his strictness in this regard. There is scarcely a letter coming from his pen which does not stress the necessity of religious silence, and the penances which he imposed for its non-observance were not slight.[22] This practice of strict silence was undoubtedly an important safeguard of religious discipline and proved to be one of the strongest bulwarks against the spirit of the world.

The devotional life of the Sisters, then as now, was directed principally to the praise and honor of the Precious Blood of Christ. Devotion to the Precious Blood was linked with public services and prayers in common, running like a motif through all of them. Daily Mass, Holy Communion, which the professed Sisters were privileged to receive almost daily, nocturnal hours of adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, the Way of the Cross, the chaplet of the Precious Blood, which commemorates the seven effusions of the Blood of the Savior, the sorrowful mysteries of the rosary — all were so many reminders of the devotion to which they had dedicated their lives and which had been enjoined upon them by their saintly foundress as their most important duty.[23]

Even in those pioneer days the ceremonies of the Church were carried out with comparative magnificence and splendor. All the great feasts of the liturgy, including the suppressed holydays and the outstanding feasts of the Blessed Virgin, were observed with due solemnity, usually with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament throughout the day.[24] As early as June, 1846, a solemn Corpus Christi procession was held in the open at Wolfscreek. Benediction was given on each of four altars erected in the fields and woods and beautifully decorated with flowers and branches, as fitting homage to the God of nature and in supplication for His blessing upon the newly sown fields. On the octave of the feast, Bishop Purcell himself carried the monstrance in solemn procession.[25] It was a triumphal march, heralding, as it were, the conquest of the King of kings over a new realm, where He would hold absolute sway in years to come.

Bishop Purcell more than once expressed his pleasure in the demonstrations of joy and respect that invariably attended his arrival in a town or village where the Faith had become deeply rooted in the hearts of the people, thanks to the missionary endeavors and prayers of the Congregation of the Precious Blood:

> There is no decline of the Catholic spirit which has distinguished the fervent Catholics of Auglaize, Mercer, and Shelby counties since the Faith was first preached to them by the deceased Professor Horstmann and the Reverend F. S. Brunner, Superior of the Society of the Most Precious Blood. Processions, banners, music, arches of evergreens and flowers, singing of hymns, *feux de joie,* and other such demonstrations of respect for the spiritual authority continue in all this portion of the diocese, old and honorable traditions.[26]

Such demonstrations recall the ages of faith in the medieval period, those happy times when Catholic faith and Catholic life pulsated through Christian society, giving it that corporateness and solidarity which the present age so sadly lacks.

The exterior activities of the Sisters were directed toward one and the same end as the interior — to give praise and honor to the Precious Blood. Following the example of Mother Brunner, the Sisters of each house cared for a number of poor children, mostly orphans, whom they took in gratis; only a few boarders were kept. Besides the fundamentals of reading, writing, and arithmetic, the girls were taught cooking, sewing, knitting, and other useful arts. Much attention was given to religious instruction and character formation. Father Brunner insisted that the children recite their catechism lesson every day after dinner and expected them to be almost as good as religious.[27] Other educational activities of the Sisters were limited at first to the parish schools in the vicinity of the convents, except for a small school at Defiance, Ohio, where the first little mission house was built in 1854.[28]

Efforts were made from the start to provide some systematic training for the Sisters who were assigned to teaching. As early as 1848, seven young Sisters were being prepared for this work, a fact that we learn from one of the many letters Father Brunner addressed to his associate, Father John Wittmer: "Here I have seven young Sisters under instruction to train them to become schoolteachers; such is the wish of the bishop. However, it seems that Sisters from France will be called to Cleveland and Sandusky."[29] (He was no doubt alluding to the Sisters of Notre Dame.) Several months later he referred to the progress the students at Wolfscreek were making in their lessons: "The Sisters are learning diligently and several are almost ready to conduct classes in German and Latin."[30]

At about this time Sister Christina Grimmer was in Dayton taking lessons in English from the Notre Dame Sisters. During the next three years others were sent to avail themselves of a like opportunity for learning the vernacular.[31] The native tongue of the Sisters was, however, no handicap in teaching their rural schools, since German was generally spoken; it was years before English became the medium of instruction.

Music, art, embroidery work and other handicrafts were soon added to the early teacher-training curriculum. In 1851 we find Father Brunner prevailing upon a certain Michael Scherzinger, a teacher and organist, to remain at Wolfscreek to give lessons to the Sisters and to instruct two of them in music. "We shall then have to look around for a piano and a guitar,"[32] he remarked significantly. Father Xavier Obermueller was also pressed into service during his leisure hours to help further the education of the Sisters.

Certainly the normal training which the pioneer teachers received was little enough as compared with present-day standards. But they were expected to supply by their native ability and tact what they lacked in teacher preparation. As in the convent schools, the Sisters endeavored to give the children a thorough training in the fundamentals, the greatest emphasis being placed on religious instructions. In his counsels to teaching Sisters, Father Brunner makes plain their responsibility in this regard:

> It will be her greatest concern that the Precious Blood of Jesus be made fruitful in the souls entrusted to her, and an unbearable thought that for even one of them this Blood should have been shed in vain. To remind the Sister of this thought, she should have a picture of the Sacred Heart on her desk and should often repeat the prayer: "Jesus, let not Thy Precious Blood be shed in vain for any of these little ones, at least not through my fault."[33]

The Sisters not engaged in teaching were employed in occupations so varied as to make the Congregation largely self-supporting. Besides working their extensive gardens and fields and plying the usual domestic tasks, they engaged in such handicrafts as spinning, weaving, knitting, and shoemaking. Their garments were for the most part homespun; their shoes and hose were their own manufacture. By this time a uniform religious habit had been adopted. It was made of poor material, severely black, with a veil "similar to those worn by American women in mourning."[34] Deft hands fashioned vestments and colorful silk or paper flowers for churches; straw hats for men's wear; pieces of embroidery. Usually such articles as well as surplus farm products were sold for cash or bartered for commodities that could not be supplied at home.[35]

Besides his many other responsibilities Father Brunner often assumed the duties of procurator. A strict economist, he was wary of allowing any unnecessary purchases or of being cheated in a bargain. Sometimes he went on shopping tours to Dayton or to Cincinnati to avail himself of wholesale prices on church supplies, stoves, books, coffee, sugar, and even material for the Sisters' veils.[36]

The food of the pioneers was of the plainest. Cornmeal seems to have held an important place in the daily diet. On one occasion when a superioress complained to Father Brunner that there was little left in the house for their winter fare except potatoes and corn, he ingeniously suggested a variety of recipes for serving the corn, assuring the Sister that one was more palatable than the other and that the variety of concoctions would be sure to please the most fastidious. For the sick, however, he always showed the greatest concern, even procuring delicacies if the patient expressed a desire for them.[37]

This account of early community life is necessarily general and sketchy, since it was pieced together from chance remarks in letters and other manuscripts. Even less is known of the lives of individual members in the pioneer community except for glimpses one gets here and there in letters. But these glimpses are sufficiently illuminating to show that the unrecorded story of these courageous religious is an epic of sacrifices willingly brought, of hardships bravely met and overcome, of toils uncomplainingly borne, and of prayers incessantly offered to the praise and honor of the Precious Blood for souls. "My elect shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth in trouble, for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their posterity with them" (Isaias LXV, 23). What they sowed in hardship and toil, the present generation of priests, Brothers, and Sisters is reaping in the flourishing Congregation of the Precious Blood.

Chapter IV

FATHER BRUNNER GOES ABROAD

THE arduous missionary travels and strenuous labors of Father Brunner during his first years in America soon impaired his health, which had never been robust. In May, 1848, his condition became so critical that he thought he would die. Several months later his life was again in actual danger, not from sickness, but from a mishap. On August 18, when he was returning to Wolfscreek from Glandorf, he fell into Reiler's Creek and was nearly drowned. In this extremity he called upon the Mother of God, promising to make a pilgrimage to *Maria Einsiedeln* in Switzerland should his life be spared. Mr. William Lang of Thompson, who was accompanying him, asserted that the priest's preservation from a sudden death on this occasion was little short of a miracle.[1]

Although the following winter saw no improvement in his health, Father Brunner decided to fulfill the promise he had made the previous summer. An opportunity to lay the matter before Bishop Rappe presented itself on June 5, 1849, when three students of the Precious Blood were ordained at Wolfscreek.[2] Having obtained the bishop's consent, he set out for Europe with Father John Van den Broeck that August.

His journal gives us a vivid account of the incidents of this trip and shows again his deep, childlike devotion to Mary. On one of the first pages of his diary he carefully set down his intention in making the journey:

> Today, August 24, is the feast of the holy Apostle, St. Bartholomew. God grant us the grace through the intercession of the Sorrowful Mother, whom we should ever venerate, especially each Friday, to love Jesus as this holy Apostle loved Him and to enter upon this journey tomor-

> row (Saturday) with the same dispositions as those with which this saint set out upon his journeys. May he and all the holy Apostles protect us on our travels and pray that this tour be a holy one. I recommend all our brethren to the protection of the dear Mother of God, the holy angels and saints in heaven. I desire nothing but to fulfill the holy will of God, and I offer our pilgrimage to the glory of God and His Blessed Mother for the spiritual welfare of each soul God has entrusted to my care and for the relief of the poor souls in purgatory.[3]

Leaving Thompson on Saturday morning, the two priests went to Sandusky by train and from there to Cleveland by steamer. Deeply impressed by the self-sacrificing zeal of Bishop Amadeus Rappe, with whom the travelers spent the following Sunday, Father Brunner exclaimed, "Here the bishops are apostles and, indeed, saints — all of those whom I have the honor to know."[4]

On Monday, August 27, Father Brunner and his companion took the steamer to Buffalo, where they were the guests of Bishop John Timon, C. M. Of him also Father Brunner wrote in glowing terms. By August 31, they were in New York with its "numberless wholesale houses, large stores, pharmacies, factories — everything in the world that one could imagine."[5] There they made reservations on the ship which was to set sail the following day for Havre-de-Grâce.

The outbound voyage was unusually stormy — high winds and fearful tempests followed by chilling rains. The sea was so rough that Father Van den Broeck could offer Holy Mass but once. Father Brunner was too ill; he lay in a high fever, unable for a whole week to read his breviary or write a single line in his journal. His one consolation was the thought that he was approaching ever nearer to the goal of his desires. "The sailors fix their gaze on the stars and compass," he wrote hopefully, "but I turn my eyes to *Maria Einsiedeln.* They sing their mariners' songs, and my soul also sings its *Ave, Maris Stella, Dei Mater Alma,* its *Magnificat anima mea Dominum.*"[6]

He was confident that Mary would obtain for him complete restoration of his health.

Arriving in Havre on October 4, they went first to Paris, where they met Abbé Desgenettes, Director of the Confraternity of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. He suggested that Father Brunner become a promoter of the devotion in America and imparted to him the necessary faculties to enroll members in the confraternity. To this day it is one of the chief devotions of the community.

On the way to Basle Father Brunner suffered another attack of fever, which left him so weak that he was scarcely able to stand. During a week's delay in this city he recuperated sufficiently to attend to some business matters. By October 18 they were finally off for Einsiedeln. The beauty of the autumn day added to the joy of the two pilgrims as they neared the end of their long journey of five thousand miles, which it had taken them fifty-five days to cover.

> At half past three in the afternoon we glimpsed the two large church towers of *Maria Einsiedeln* — a sight that brought tears to my eyes and caused my heart to overflow with gratitude at the remembrance of the infinite goodness of God and the loving solicitude of the Mother of divine Grace. I could think of nothing else to say but: *Fecit mihi magna qui potens est* and *Misericordias Dei in aeternum cantabo* and *Salve Regina, Mater misericordiae, vita, dulcedo et spes nostra, salve.*[7]

The Benedictine Fathers received the wayfarers most cordially and placed at their disposal a large room near the shrine; here their meals were served during the next eight days, which they spent in the solitude of a retreat. Refreshed in body and renewed in spirit, Father Brunner went on to Chur to confer with Bishop Caspar von Carl about some important matters that weighed upon his mind, while Father Van den Broeck went directly to Loewenberg.[8]

Great political changes affecting both Church and State had taken place in Switzerland during Father Brunner's absence of six years. The radical movement which had already begun shortly after the July Revolution of 1830 and which had proved so disastrous to his own early missionary endeavors, had by this time reached a crisis. To protect their rights against the Liberals, who were agitating a revision of the Treaty of Confederation of 1815, the seven Catholic cantons — Lucerne, Unterwalden, Zug, Fribourg, Uri, Schwyz, and Valais — had formed a separate league, the Sonderbund, in December, 1845, and this had eventually led to the civil war of 1847. The defeat of the Sonderbund resulted in a great economic crisis, the suppression of more than fifty monasteries, the confiscation of church property, and the enforcement of the new Constitution of Confederation of September 12, 1848.[9]

The effect of this political crisis upon Loewenberg Father Brunner was to learn all too soon. Indirect pressure had been brought to bear upon the castle by the relatives of a deceased widow of Ruschein, who had shortly before her death given a donation to the convent out of sheer generosity. Afterward her family had laid claim not only to the capital but also to the interest that should have accrued thereto in the intervening time. The Chancellor of the diocese, Father Casanova, who was acting as defendant for the community, had refused to pay on the plea of gross injustice and the case had been taken to court. The liberal-minded judge decided in favor of the claimants and the community was obliged to pay them 2,100 florins. Not satisfied with this, they were now demanding under threat that the castle share the burden of the expenses for the lawsuit.

Such was the situation when Father Brunner arrived in Chur on Saturday, October 27, 1846. What was he to do? Were he to sell the castle it would be at a considerable loss, even aside from the cost of the repairs that had been made. Yet the bishop, the chancellor, and other trusted friends advised him to make the sale and to take the Sisters who were still in the castle to America with him. Learned men who could read the signs of the times were predicting an even more hostile attitude of the democratic government toward the Church and its religious houses. Why not act then before the evil should grow worse?[10]

When Father Brunner reached Loewenberg the following Thursday, October 29, he found ten Sisters and thirteen children with Father Butz still acting as chaplain and director. They were all well and contented, apparently unaware of the dangers that were threatening to break in upon them at any moment. The only rifts in the cloud of indecision that overhung Father Brunner's own soul were the welcome he received from his spiritual children and the deep religious spirit which prevailed among them. "Everything in the castle is in splendid order," he wrote to America two days later, "just as I left it when I went away. I do believe that not a single cupboard or picture has been moved out of place." On the evening of his arrival he began the spiritual exercises with the Sisters.[11]

On All Souls' Day he and Father Van den Broeck walked down the familiar path to St. Mary's at Sagens, where they attended Requiem Mass for the poor souls and where Father Brunner prayed for light to know the will of God regarding the disposition of the castle. As he stood over the crypt where his mother lay at rest, he wondered what she would advise were she living. Would she approve of his severing the last tie that bound him to his native country? To seek further counsel in his perplexity he intended to make a pilgrimage to Seewis and Citailg the following week, but his journal shows that he was unable to carry out this intention. The rest of the month his time was taken up with business matters of the Congregation, settling property of individual members, and meeting and accepting new candidates.[12]

The ensuing winter was spent in the quiet seclusion of Loewenberg, where Father Brunner enjoyed to the full a much needed rest after the feverish activities of the previous six years. He devoted part of his time to putting the Sisters' Rule in final shape before sending it to the Bishop of Chur for approbation.

Why Father Brunner preferred to have recourse to the Bishop of Chur for approval of the Rule instead of to the Bishop of Cincinnati or of Cleveland, in which dioceses the great majority of the Sisters were living, remains a question. One conjecture is that he still considered Loewenberg, which he had not yet wholly decided to relinquish, the central house of the community, and by its location it was under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Chur. Again he may have thought that the German-speaking bishop would be more favorable to his cause than the Irish or the French prelate. It is most likely, however, that he wanted to get the opinion of some other churchman before venturing to present the Rule for approbation to the Moderator General in Rome and eventually to the Holy See.

Caspar von Carl, the ordinary of Chur, expressed his approval in the following commendatory letter:

> This your manuscript, which I herewith remail to you, I have read with great joy and consolation, to my own edification and salutary abasement. What remains for me but to ask God to grant that what has been dictated and written in so holy a spirit may by its observance and practice lead to true sanctity?[13]

Gratified by the words of the ordinary, Father Brunner prepared to send a copy of the manuscript to Rome for further approbation. But several months passed before he carried out his resolution.

With the return of spring, Father Van den Broeck made preparations to sail for America, while Father Brunner decided to remain until affairs would be settled at the castle. Early in March the little Hollander set out with Sisters Armella Raufer and Charitas Drescher from Loewenberg and five candidates from various localities in Europe; a sixth was added in New York, where they arrived a month later. In the party was Mary Spiegelhalter from Buchenbach, afterward Sister Digna, whose father, an intimate friend of Father Brunner's, was to be instrumental in building the shrine of Maria Steig in Thompson.[14]

Meanwhile, Father Brunner was contemplating a trip to Lyons, France, where he hoped to receive financial aid from the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, founded there in 1822. The journey turned out to be a veritable way of the cross. Sick unto death, with a high fever, he arrived in the city late in April, and immediately sought refuge first in one of its Catholic hospitals, then in the other, only to find the doors of both closed against him. Dragging his feeble body to the Bureau of the Propagation of the Faith, he received friendly words but not a penny to aid his mission work in America. The Bishop of Cleveland, the director informed him, had appropriated his quota for the year 1851 in advance.

In this extremity he fortunately met a friend, Herr Casanova from Grisons, who finally obtained lodging for the sick priest in the house of the Fathers of Mary at the foot of Mount Fourvières. The shrine of Notre Dame on top of the mount, which is connected with the old Jesuit college where Blessed Claude de la Colombière made his early studies, is Lyons' greatest title to fame:

> . . . If ever you should come to Lyons, do not forget Notre Dame de Fourvières. Do not forget it for the good of your soul; do not forget it for the splendid sight you will enjoy. All along the banks of the Saône in the vicinity of the town, there runs a ridge of hills that forms a sort of link between the Alps in the east, and the Auvergnate mountains in the west. These hills are covered with beautiful woods and vineyards, here and there a cottage or chateau peeping out from the shrubbery that surrounds it. Fourvières towers just above the cathedral, and is crowned by a modest chapel consecrated to the Blessed Virgin, as well as by a proud observatory rearing its head still higher than the church. . . .
>
> Fourvières is supposed to have been the site of the old Roman town, a question I shall not pretend to decide upon.

> An aqueduct, even now existing, and running out to a great distance in the adjacent country, furnished the place with water. A temple arose where the Christians at a later period established a chapel to the Blessed Virgin, and in time the place became a celebrated pilgrimage. Lyons is prouder of Fourvières than of anything else; prouder even than of its Association for the Propagation of the Faith, and that is saying a great deal.[15]

Each morning of his three days' stay Father Brunner climbed the steep hill graced by this beautiful shrine of Mary, and there offered Holy Mass for the community. As if in compensation for the hardships of his journey and the utter failure of its object, his soul was filled with consolation. "This morning on Mount Fourvières," he confided to his diary, "when I was again feeling pretty miserable, I renewed the offering of my life to the dear Mother of God; I wish to put my whole trust in her. I should, indeed, have 4,000 francs to buy some necessary church supplies and some books for our young priests. But if she obtains for me and mine 4,000 graces instead, I shall be well satisfied, even if I do not receive a single cent here."[16]

Leaving Lyons on May 8, Father Brunner went to Basle and Freiburg, spending several days in each city. On his way to Baden he suffered another attack of fever but rallied sufficient strength to transact the business which brought him there.[17]

Throughout the rest of the month, though ill most of the time, he was occupied with affairs of his own family and those of the community. He wished to send his sister in the Visitation Order, Sister Scholastica, a portrait of their mother which he had had finished recently, but found it difficult to ascertain her whereabouts.[18] He was moreover concerned about a letter he received at this time from the Moderator General in Rome regarding the Sisters' Rule, which he had submitted to his superior for consideration and approval. Don Merlini, evidently taking for granted that the American Sisters were a branch of the Sisters Adorers of the Precious Blood in Rome, advised Father Brunner to wait until he received a copy of the

Rule of the Roman Congregation, lately approved by the Holy See and about to be published; then he could make such adaptations as would be proper to the needs and customs of the American community. Meanwhile the Sisters could continue in the observance of their Rule as it was then drawn up; "and," he added, "may God grant them rich graces and true sanctity."[19]

That Father Brunner did not carry out the suggestion of Don Merlini later developments prove. Instead he wrote again to the Moderator, reiterating his request for approbation by the Holy See and for introducing the vows, while apparently ignoring the idea of amalgamating the Sisters with the Roman Congregation.[20] Yet in a later letter he wrote significantly: "If the Holy Father wishes our Sisters to profess the approved rule based on that of the Visitandines or of St. Augustine, while retaining their present customs, I leave it wholly to his pleasure."[21]

On June 11, he returned to Loewenberg to make immediate preparations for the homeward journey. "The time of our departure is very near," he recorded in his journal, "but there is nothing at all in order regarding the castle or anything else. It is well that the main object of my trip was the pilgrimage to Einsiedeln. Then, if I have been able to accomplish nothing else, I shall have at least realized the principal aim of my long journey."[22] During the month of July on the advice of physicians, he spent several weeks at San Bernardini in Rhaetia to recuperate after his long siege of fever, hoping that by drinking the mineral waters for which this mountain is famous he would regain sufficient health and strength to make the arduous voyage home.[23]

August 12, the feast of St. Clare, was the date set for the departure from Loewenberg castle, which was left at the disposal of the Bishop of Chur. Father Butz and seven Sisters — namely, Sisters Clara Meisen, Nothburga Wasmer, Felicula Dentz, Petronilla Ruf, Sophia Steiert, Thea and Theonilla Zipfel — accompanied Father Brunner to Einsiedeln to make a farewell visit to the famous shrine. Here and at several other places en route new recruits joined their company so that by the time they reached Mannheim they numbered thirty: five priests, eight Brothers, seven Sisters, and eight candidates. The rest of the journey from Rotterdam, where they set sail, was quite uneventful, and they arrived safely at Thompson, Ohio, on October 13, 1850.[24]

* * * *

After making a visitation of all the American convents in order to have an accurate report on the status of the Congregation, Father Brunner prepared to leave for a second European trip early in June, 1852. His itinerary this time was to include a pilgrimage to Rome, where he intended to seek the full approbation of the Holy Father for the Congregation of the Precious Blood in America. Father Lawrence Feger and a student, Carl Fetz, both of whom desired to return permanently to their native country, were to accompany him.[25]

Before setting out, Father Brunner wrote to Bishop Purcell and to Bishop Rappe for written recommendations to the Holy See, trusting that the words of the prelates would have weight with authorities in Rome. His letters contained a plea that the bishops use their influence in obtaining the confirmation of the Holy Father for the official introduction into the Congregation of the three vows of religion, and a fourth one of stability in the institute. In representing that all the members were unanimous in making this request, Father Brunner was doubtless taking too much for granted.[26] While he was right in stating that many of the priests and Sisters had already taken private vows, some of the priests were opposed to the profession of public vows, since such a practice was not in keeping with the original Rule of the founder.[27]

The answer of Bishop Rappe was encouraging. He expressed his thanks to Almighty God for the great spiritual good which the diocese was deriving from the Congregation of the Precious Blood, commending the preaching of the Fathers, the exemplary lives of all the members, and in particular the Sisters' perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. He wrote, moreover, that he entertained the hope that the Congregation would be a means of propagating the Faith in America, and that he would pray that the good work begun would be strengthened and stabilized by the approbation of Holy Church.[28]

Several circumstances combined to make this voyage much more agreeable than the previous one in 1849: weather conditions were favorable — not a single storm on the way out; Father Brunner's health was so much improved that he could, as he himself puts it, "leap over mountain and valley";[29] and the ship made good time, casting anchor in Havre on July 4, the feast of the Precious Blood. If Father Brunner was happy to breathe again the clean mountain air of his native country, he was little edified by the moral atmosphere that pervaded the diligence which brought him from Paris to Colmar. "I have not heard a single good word all day; on the contrary, I have been forced to listen to more blasphemies, more foolish and obscene talk in this one day than I heard in all the eight years I was in America."[30]

After a brief call at the mission house connected with the shrine at *Drei Aehren,* Father Brunner went to Freiburg, where he remained over a week as the guest of Mrs. Metzler, mother of three members of the American community.[31] July 21 found him knocking at the door of the Abbey of Maria Stein, which twenty-three years before to the day he had left as a Benedictine monk to join the Trappists at Oelenberg. There amid the scenes of his boyhood and early priesthood he spent eight days in retreat, reliving again the experiences that had been crowded into those first adventurous years of his religious life.

No trip to Switzerland would be complete without a pilgrimage to the famous shrines where Our Lady was known to dispense her favors more lavishly than elsewhere. As a matter of fact Father Brunner had put this down as the very first objective of his trip: "To make pilgrimages to the miraculous shrines of Europe, especially those of the Mother of God, for all the members of the Congregation of the Precious Blood; to thank God through her for the many great blessings bestowed upon our community, as also to ask for new ones."[32] From Maria Stein he went to *Maria Einsiedeln,* where he lingered long enough to offer the Holy Sacrifice; from Einsiedeln to Chur, and thence to San Bernardini, where he spent the greater part of the month of August taking the water treatments as he had done on the previous trip.

From here he wrote a letter to Don Merlini, in which he enclosed Bishop Rappe's letter of recommendation. He deemed it wise to clarify beforehand the apparent misconception the bishop had expressed concerning the relation of the priests' community to the Sisters'. Father Brunner maintained that, although they did possess their temporal goods in common, the priests did not depend upon the Sisters, but that all were subject to the director. "If the Holy Father," he added, "does not see fit to grant approbation of the Rule and permission to make perpetual vows, I am content." He moreover signified his intention of going to Rome himself as soon as he could find a congenial traveling companion.[33]

On Saturday, August 28, in the company of Jacob Willi and the latter's son-in-law, Father Brunner arrived in Salux. The pilgrims arose at daybreak the next morning and ascended Mount Citailg, where they found the shrine lonely and desolate in its bare surroundings even at that time of the year. At the altar of Our Lady of Mercy Father Brunner celebrated a high Mass for the community and its friends and benefactors, his two companions forming the choir, and John, the old sexton, acting as server. Save for this trio and the holy angels, no other audience was in attendance at that greatest of all dramas. "Oh, how much I longed," wrote Father Brunner, "to see all our members, my dear children, gathered here today at this shrine, whence our poor little community had its actual beginning through the intercession of the Mother of God."[34] The following day, the feast of St. Rose, he again offered the Holy Sacrifice on Citailg, united in spirit with the community in distant America, where he knew St. Rose was being honored in a particular manner as a special patroness of the Congregation.

Passing over Chur, Father Brunner stayed a week at Loewenberg castle, now converted into an orphanage where twenty-two children were under the charge of four Sisters of Mercy. Then he returned to Chur for a long wait. The bishop had promised to allow Chancellor Casanova, an old friend of Father Brunner's, to accompany him to Rome.[35] But he was to be disappointed.

After a delay of two months in Chur awaiting a traveling companion, he finally set out for the Eternal City early in November with Father Sebastian Capaul.[36] On the way they stopped for short visits at several mission houses of the Society of the Precious Blood: at Cesena, where Father Brunner had first seen a Precious Blood missionary; at Rimini, famed for its miraculous statue of the Blessed Virgin which is said to move its eyes; at Ancona, where the most recent foundation of the Congregation had been made in 1849. Arriving in Rome on November 23, they went directly to the mission house of the Precious Blood Fathers, San Salvatore in Campo, where they found their brethren in retreat preparatory to the feast of St. Francis Xavier. There, as in the other houses they had visited, they were most cordially received.

The time spent in Rome was devoted to visiting the churches and holy places and attending to business of the Congregation, especially the approbation by the Holy See of the Rule and of perpetual vows. "It will take some time before we can hope to obtain approval,"[37] he wrote to America several days later. In Albano, Father Brunner had the happiness of lodging in the room of Gaspar del Bufalo and of offering the Holy Sacrifice several times on his tomb.

> I again read Holy Mass on the tomb of our venerable founder for each and every member of our community, for the sick, for all those recommended to us, for all our needs;

> I asked especially, as I am accustomed to do in every Holy Mass, for saintly priests, saintly Brothers and students, saintly Sisters, and many hundred more convents of the Precious Blood filled with saints; for myself I asked especially the grace of a true conversion.[38]

The crowning event of this trip was the audience with the Holy Father, Pius IX, which took place on December 5. It was on this occasion that the Vicar of Christ spoke these memorable words as he raised his hand in blessing over the two missioners kneeling at his feet: "May the shadow of your venerable founder ever accompany you."[39] Of this incident, Father Brunner jotted down in his diary, "This blessing is exactly what I desire in this world, and the Holy Father could not have given me a blessing that rejoiced me more and inspired me with greater confidence than just this one."[40]

A visit to the Augustinian nuns on Monte Cavallo, where Father Brunner offered a Holy Mass for the community, was the occasion of an interesting revelation. These nuns in their picturesque habits of white and red kept perpetual vigil before the Blessed Sacrament. Having heard of Mother Brunner and of her zeal for the spread of perpetual adoration, they had become so interested in her work that they had her life, her prayers, and the history of the convents of the Precious Blood in America translated into Italian.[41]

On January 1, 1853, Father Brunner was again at *Maria Einsiedeln,* from where he sent New Year greetings to the American Congregation:

> Honor, praise, and thanksgiving to the dear Mother of God. With her at Einsiedeln I ended yesterday the old year 1852, and with her here I begin today in the Most Holy Name of Jesus the New Year 1853. On both days I offered the Holy Sacrifice at her shrine and I placed all my children, from the smallest to the largest, before her, saying: "See, Mother, these are your children!" And to all of you I say: "See, children, this is your Mother." God grant that during

> this New Year we become good children of such a good Mother by improving whatever is still imperfect in ourselves. She will surely aid our feeble efforts.[42]

For the rest of the winter Father Brunner had his headquarters in Freiburg, Baden, whence he made several pilgrimages to Our Lady's shrines and traveled to different points in search of candidates. According to his own estimate, more than a hundred persons applied for leave to return with him to America, but he was forced to limit that number. In apprizing Mother Johanna of the large number of candidates who were to enter the Congregation that year, he reminded her that the newcomers were expecting to find in the Sisters "so many glowing coals from which they could catch fire."[43] Thirty-five young women in all entered the community from Europe in 1853; eighteen of them arrived in America with Father Brunner in June.

Among the applicants for the Fathers' community was his own nephew, Isidore. Father Brunner was exceptionally slow in making his decision regarding the lad. He inquired about the boy's age and character, his intention in going abroad, the financial status of his father, and ended with a refusal on the ground that he had been obliged to put off many another who was eager to go.[44] Whether Father Brunner's action was dictated by a spirit of impartiality or by antipathy toward his brother is hard to say. Yet one could scarcely accuse him of vindictiveness.

He did not return empty-handed. For each priest he brought a large cross and for each Sister a smaller one to be worn on the breast as a constant reminder of their vocation as adorers of the Precious Blood of the Crucified Redeemer. Beautiful religious paintings, the gifts of friends abroad, as well as needed church supplies were distributed among the different convents. Although he did not succeed in obtaining the principal object of his trip to Rome — papal approbation — his journey turned out to be otherwise a felicitous one, from which he reaped both temporal and spiritual benefits.[45]

* * * *

For the next two years Father Brunner remained in America, trying to consolidate the work he had begun and carried on almost singlehanded through the sheer force of his personality, coupled, of course, with the grace of God. The Congregation had by this time grown to such proportions that he found it was beginning to elude his grasp. The increase in membership, especially of the Sisters' community, was phenomenal. By 1855, the Congregation numbered 28 priests, 64 lay Brothers, and 224 Sisters.[46] During this interval the convent, Mary's Home, was established in Indiana, a new brick building was erected at Minster, and the chapel, convent, and barns at Himmelgarten, which were burnt to the ground in the disastrous fire of March 29, 1854, had to be rebuilt.

One of the greatest drawbacks to the complete success of the work was the little training Father Brunner was able to provide for candidates to the priesthood, a circumstance that was to draw down much adverse criticism on the Congregation during the next several years. This insufficient preparation was due partly to the lack of proper facilities, partly also to the great demand for German-speaking priests, created by the sudden surge of German immigrant population in Ohio. Father Brunner expected the newly ordained priests to make up by their piety and zeal for souls what they lacked in learning, but the bishops were more exacting.

The first ominous note was struck when Bishop Rappe refused to ordain several students who, on being examined by Father Evrard of Toledo, were found unprepared for the grave responsibilities of the priesthood. Father Brunner heard of this from the bishop himself when on June 12, 1855, he and Father Patrick Henneberry were stopping in Cleveland on their way to New York to set sail for Europe.[47]

Father Brunner's object in making this third European voyage was similar to that of former trips. The climate of America did not seem to agree with his state of health, and he was constantly spurred on by the hope that the salubrious mountain air of his fatherland, combined with fervent pilgrimages to Our Lady's shrines, would eventually work the miracle of a cure.

He spent most of his time abroad on this trip at the Abbey of Maria Stein, where he was engaged in writing the biography of his former Prior, Dom Boniface Pfluger, and in preparing for the printer the life of Venerable Gaspar del Bufalo, translated from the Italian by Fidel Singer, besides several religious books and pamphlets for the Congregation. Meanwhile, Father Henneberry was delving into the study of languages: of French in Strassburg and of Romansh at Loewenberg castle.[48]

To Father Brunner's quiet retreat in the old abbey came rumblings of further trouble at home. He was informed by John Probst of more complaints that were being lodged against the Precious Blood missionaries for their lack of education. The question had been brought up at the provincial council in Cincinnati with the result that Bishop Rappe was again taking no chances in ordaining priests who were unprepared. "For a long time now I have secretly entertained the wish," wrote John Probst, "that you would make a different, a better choice of priests and would be concerned about a complete training for them, but others have assured me that *this was contrary to your principles.*"[49]

Such a direct thrust naturally filled Father Brunner with consternation. "In God's name," he exhorted Father John of the Cross (Wittmer), "we will with God's help do what we can. I purposely write you this in detail that you may do your utmost to see to it that the students are well instructed and that all the other priests study diligently, which is certainly my will." In this same letter he hinted moreover at his intention to transfer the seminary from the Cleveland to the Cincinnati diocese, trusting that Bishop Purcell would be more lenient in his requirements for the priesthood than Bishop Rappe.[50]

Several months later, however, he was to learn from the Moderator General that words of criticism regarding the ignorance of the American priests due to lack of sufficient preparation had reached Rome from Bishop Purcell himself. To remedy the situation Don Merlini advised Father Brunner to have two of the best students sent to the seminary in Cincinnati to prepare themselves to teach the others, and thereby gain the confidence of the bishop. Father Brunner had his objections to such a plan, as he confided in a letter to Father John of the Cross. He expressed the fear that religious students studying in the diocesan seminary might lose the spirit of the Congregation or even leave the community altogether; he intimated the danger to which they would be exposed of becoming proud and turning out to be "educated" pastors rather than humble missionaries of the Precious Blood. In the end he yielded, however, authorizing his vicar to allow Joseph Dwenger and a companion, Paul Reuter, to continue their studies at Mount St. Mary Seminary, Cincinnati.[51]

Untoward remarks and complaints about Mother Johanna had also reached Father Brunner's ears. She was accused of being too lenient in granting permissions to the Sisters, especially regarding food and drink, a disposition that might tend to weaken their fervor. Mother Johanna was the soul of charity, but her kindness was often misconstrued as lack of firmness or even as flattery. Again, her timidity and extreme reserve, caused chiefly by her fear of giving offense, were sometimes put down as ill will or stubbornness. Father Wittmer found in her lack of assertiveness on questions pertaining to the government of the Congregation, the cause for some of his complaints. Even Father Brunner, who esteemed her highly, admitted that he had had many a struggle for patience and meekness in dealing with her. In this instance, therefore, after counseling prayer and humility, he directed Father Wittmer, should he find too great difficulty in getting along with her, to appoint another Sister in her stead to take charge of all the houses. But the matter was later resolved in another way.[52]

Notwithstanding the many problems that were taking toll of his time and peace of mind, Father Brunner enjoyed the complete solitude afforded him at Maria Stein. "Today I have been here four weeks," he wrote to the Congregation, "and find myself in much better health than when I was in Freiburg. Day and night I am alone and like a prisoner take my meals alone; then I go for a several hours' walk while I pray the rosary. From a little mountain called Paradise, I look toward America and send you all my blessing."[53] Several times he interrupted his solitude to make excursions to Freiburg and Tyrol to enlist candidates for the Congregation.[54]

On February 10, Father Patrick Henneberry left for America with eight youths and nine young ladies who wished to enter the community.[55] Father Brunner remained, with the intention of going to Rome the following summer to present his report and, if possible, to clear up misunderstandings regarding conditions in America.

The next four months found him still at the abbey, but toward the end of July he went to Terasp, where he was lodged at a Capuchin monastery. His immediate plan was to remain there three weeks before starting on his pilgrimage to Loreto and Rome,[56] but quite suddenly he changed his mind and resolved to go back to America as soon as possible. No expressed reason can be found for this revocation of his intentions except perhaps a hint in a letter which he addressed to Father John of the Cross: "My foot is worse, but my head trouble has been better ever since I determined to return to America and give retreats to the community."[57] Probably a letter from his vicar, recounting the difficulties he was having with some of the members, made Father Brunner realize that he was needed at home.

About the middle of September he was in Havre, whence he embarked with Father Xavier Obermueller, whom he had engaged as a professor of theology, Father Habertheuer, and seventeen candidates: two lads for the brotherhood and fifteen girls for the sisterhood. He returned with a vague notion of carrying out a project which he had had in mind for three years and which had previously been suggested to him by the Archbishop of Freiburg: to found in Europe a sort of recruiting station for candidates to the Congregation, where their vocation could be tested for a year or more before they would be brought over to America. If only he could be more certain of God's will in this regard![58]

Chapter V

SCHELLENBERG
A EUROPEAN FOUNDATION

THE membership of the Congregation of the Precious Blood was greatly augmented between the years 1849-1855 by candidates that Father Brunner was instrumental in bringing to America on each of his European trips. But this mustering of troops had its distinct disadvantages, as he soon discovered.

The majority of applicants were sincere, hard-working peasants who became a credit to the community and to the country which had adopted them; but there were others who joined the ranks of candidates under the pretext of answering a divine call, while in reality they desired to share in the fabled wealth of the New World: it was the era of the great gold rush to California, where the precious metal could be panned from rivers and streams. Other candidates, finally, were unfitted by nature and by grace for the religious life, which, especially in pioneer days, exacted heroism from those who would live it well. Naturally the majority of individuals belonging to these two classes did not remain in the community, but were soon set adrift in a strange, unsettled country, ignorant of the language and customs, and often penniless. The community which had brought them over from distant shores had the responsibility of caring for their spiritual and temporal needs until such time as they would be able to shift for themselves. They were, therefore, a source of untold worry and a great financial burden.

Such considerations induced Father Brunner to undertake a fourth journey abroad in July, 1857. He had at length reached the decision to establish somewhere in Europe a community house of perpetual adoration where candidates could be put on probation for a year or more before being sent to the American missions.[1]

His continued ill-health, which always seemed aggravated whenever he returned to America, was another reason for making the trip. After his return from Europe the previous November, he had begun to make his regular visitation of the Precious Blood convents and give the annual retreats. But after the fourth one the hand of the Lord again touched him and he was forced to bed, where he remained most of the time from January to May. He made a vow that if he were spared he would again visit the shrines in France and Switzerland and the tomb of Gaspar del Bufalo in Italy.[2]

Moreover, he still cherished the hope of introducing the vows into the Congregation and of obtaining the approbation of the Holy See for the Sisters' Rule, which had never been given in writing. To achieve these ends, he deemed personal contacts with the Holy Father and the Moderator General necessary.[3]

Opposition on the part of some members of the Congregation to Father Brunner's frequent and prolonged absences from his post of duty in America was not wanting. Criticism came from those who misconstrued his motives as lack of interest in the American scene. Other members who were sincerely devoted to him advised him to go for the sake of his health; and the same advice was given by both Archbishop Purcell and Bishop Rappe, whom he consulted in the matter.[4]

Since his condition was somewhat improved by the end of May, Father Brunner completed his visitation of all the houses and set out from Thompson with Father Maximilian Homburger on the vigil of the feast of St. John the Baptist, leaving Father Wittmer again as his representative. Did he have any inkling that this voyage was to be his last? The careful provision he made for the government of the Sisters' community and the final instructions he imparted to them in a circular letter written shortly before his departure seem to indicate that he had some premonition he would not return.[5]

Back in Europe once more, Father Brunner first made pilgrimages, in fulfillment of his vow, to Our Lady of Victory and the Immaculate Heart of Mary shrines in Paris; then over Freiburg to Maria Stein and Einsiedeln. On August 15 he arrived at Obladis in the Tyrolese mountains to seek relaxation after his long, wearisome journey and to take the famous water cure.[6]

Soon afterward, the few weeks' rest which he was permitting himself was disturbed by distressing news from home. For one thing, advantage had been taken of his absence by Father Anthony Meier, who had recently become a thorn in his side, and who now, as director of the students, was taking matters into his own hands. Writing directly to Archbishop Purcell, he lodged bitter complaints against the community, which Father Brunner later denounced as "lies."[7] These charges, which may have contained some grains of truth, were the beginning of endless trouble and were to cast a shadow over the last years of Father Brunner's life.[8] Besides, misunderstanding had risen again between Father John Wittmer and Mother Johanna, and matters in general between the priests and Sisters were not running smoothly. Dissatisfaction seemed rife on all sides. Father Brunner did what he could to revive the sinking spirit of his vicar in America by writing letters of advice and encouragement and promising to offer the Holy Sacrifice and to make more pilgrimages for the welfare of the Congregation.[9]

While Father Brunner remained in Obladis, Father Maximilian went to Feldkirch and other nearby places, stopping to pray at shrines and to visit the relatives of some of the members of the Congregation. At the same time he was on the alert to find a suitable location for the house of perpetual adoration. An opportunity seemed to present itself in Swabia, but when ecclesiastical approbation was sought, the Bishop of Rotterdam, fearing the civil authorities, advised against asking favors of a not-too-friendly government. Thus the first attempt came to nought.[10]

By October the two priests had joined company again and were at Kronburg near Landeck in Upper Tyrol, contemplating the establishment of a convent there. The place was much like Loewenberg except that the castle itself, Kronburg, after which the mountain is named, lay in ruins on the summit, while some distance below in a depression forming a small valley, new buildings had been erected about the shrine of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, which had stood since the year 1673. The shrine and the rectory, a two-story residence for the priest in charge, were a foundation and could not be bought as a private possession. The other buildings, all made of rough brick and found to be in good condition, included a spacious house three stories high, another large residence for priests, and somewhat removed, a fine large barn. Surrounding the buildings was a fair expanse of farmland and abundant woodland.

The whole Kronburg estate was owned by a saintly priest of eighty-four years, Father H. Staefeli, whose one desire was to see his property turned to a good purpose before his death. Some years before, he had prevailed upon the Christian Brothers to open a school for boys there, but its location being somewhat remote, it had attracted no more than a score of pupils; hence the Brothers had been forced to abandon it about 1846.[11]

Father Brunner found that, as far as the place was concerned, there was little left to be desired. Here was a church, a shrine of the Blessed Mother; here were house and barn and field; here was the seclusion so necessary for a religious institute. But there was the cost of 18,000 francs to be reckoned with, a circumstance that put off the final decision for months and in the end made them determine not to take over the place.[12]

Meanwhile, with his usual impetuosity, Father Brunner had set about making immediate plans. Word was sent to twenty-four promising young Tyrolese women, whom he had listed as possible candidates, to assemble at Kronburg by October 14. The following day, the feast of St. Teresa, he intended to begin the spiritual exercises and to initiate the retreatants into the practice of perpetual adoration. Later a number of orphans were to be taken in and educated.

But there was another concern that caused him to send a letter posthaste to America. He was in need of an older, experienced Sister to train these newly arrived youthful aspirants in the principles of the religious life. In this letter, addressed to Father John Wittmer, he stipulated no one in particular — any one of the superioresses would do — but she should come soon before inclement weather set in. As her companion, he suggested Sister Radygundis Gerteis, a novice of mature age who had entered from Stein, Canton Aargau, the year before. Her presence at home, he wrote, would probably insure her share in her father's legacy, and might be the means of inducing a younger sister to enter the community.[13]

On October 15, Father Brunner wrote a letter of similar tenor to Sister Kunigunda Wehrle. That very day he had started a retreat with some nineteen of the Tyrolese girls who had responded to his invitation, and hours of adoration were to begin that evening. Though he left the choice of a superioress for the new foundation to Father Wittmer, he indicated that his preference lay between Mother Johanna and Sister Kunigunda; of the two, Mother Johanna, being the younger and stronger, would be better able to make the long voyage. In the event that Mother Johanna should be sent to Kronburg, Sister Kunigunda was to assume the office of Mother General during the former's absence and reside in the motherhouse at Maria Stein.[14] Though this letter was written in October, it was late the next spring before final arrangements could be made.

As a matter of fact, by November Father Brunner was becoming doubtful of the whole Kronburg venture; he was beginning to suspect that it might turn out to be only a financial burden after all. Although a number of candidates had remained after the retreat and were living according to the Rule of the Sisters in America, he was no longer in a hurry about having Mother Johanna and her companion come to Kronburg;

he put them off until after Candlemas, when weather conditions would be more favorable for traveling.[15]

By January, he was even more hesitant about the whole affair, since the bishop refused to give his full approbation to the project until the shrine would be free of debt. Father Maximilian was out trying to find benefactors, but with little success. Of the nineteen candidates who had been received at Kronburg in October, only seven were retained — a number just sufficient to keep up nocturnal hours of adoration. The whole outlook was not encouraging, to say the least.[16]

In February, Father Brunner finally reached the decision not to make a start at Kronburg, but in Voralberg near Feldkirch, Austria. There, upon the advice of Father J. B. Hagg, whom he had chosen as his spiritual director, he was thinking of taking over Mount St. Victor Convent. However, the Bishop of Brixen counseled him to wait before making a final choice of a place until the Sisters should arrive from America and he could consult them.[17] Accordingly, Father Brunner wrote for Mother Johanna and Sister Radygundis to come at once, instructing them to go to Father Hagg in Feldkirch to receive further directions after they had made the usual pilgrimages.

Father Brunner's original plan had been to start for Rome about the middle of November, but because of illness and the unsettled state of affairs at Kronburg he was obliged to defer this trip until spring. With his "faithful Timothy," as he called Father Maximilian, he arrived in Loreto on March 18, 1858. Father Maximilian wrote feelingly of their week's sojourn in this sacred spot, which he was loath to leave even to visit the Eternal City with its numberless holy places. "You may say as much as you possibly can about Loreto; you feel more than you could ever express. It is the holy house in which the dear Mother of God, St. Joseph, and their beloved Jesus lived, prayed, and practiced heavenly virtues. The walls tell you that; every stone tells you that; the very air you breathe in the holy house tells you that."[18]

On March 30, the Tuesday of Holy Week, they were in Rome. Here Father Brunner was afflicted with his old foot trouble and was forced to spend most of his time at Albano instead of visiting shrines and churches. In the mission house of San Salvatore in Campo he was privileged to occupy the room of Gaspar del Bufalo and frequently to visit the founder's tomb. In this enforced solitude his mind often reverted to America, while the thought of death loomed before him with startling definiteness. He passed long hours in revising the Rule of the American Congregation.[19]

He needed courage to face the trials which he encountered in Rome. Not only was he afflicted in body, partly from his foot, partly because of the meager Italian diet, which besides bread consisted chiefly of uncooked vegetables, cheese, and raw eggs;[20] he was cut to the depths of his soul by what he considered disloyalty on the part of one of his sons, who instead of voicing his grievances to his immediate superiors had had the temerity to represent certain complaints in writing to Archbishop Purcell as coming from the priests in general. Father Meier's "litany of complaints" had been enclosed in a letter sent to Rome by the Cincinnati prelate as early as the previous fall. The contents of both missives had eventually come to the ears of the Holy Father. That the archbishop's letter contained not a single word of justification of the Congregation was another sword-thrust in the heart of Father Brunner. He realized that the American Congregation was wholly discredited in Rome on these charges: that the priests were obliged to live under the dominion of the Sisters, one of whom especially was proud and stingy; and that they possessed nothing themselves — not even a house which they could call their own. They desired emancipation from the sway of the Sisters and a convenient home where they could live independently.[21]

Don Merlini had withheld making any comment or expressing any opinion until he was able to confer personally with Father Brunner.[22] The latter was now called upon to answer the charges publicly at a general congress of the Congregation which was to convene early in April. Having carefully prepared a manuscript in which he compared point by point the Roman Rule with American conditions, he appeared at the meeting "with fear and trembling." After the paper was read and the whole situation in America made clear, the superiors admitted that the different circumstances evidently called for a modification of the Roman Rule. They made, however, several recommendations: that as soon as possible a community house be built exclusively for priests and students, where the Brothers would take full charge of domestic affairs; that four consultors, instead of two as heretofore, be appointed to aid the American provincial; that an official record of all business proceedings be kept.

Father Brunner showed readiness to accede to the desires of his superiors as soon as circumstances would permit. As long as the priests were so few in number and so widely scattered among different parishes, the plan to build a separate community house did not seem feasible. Moreover, if the means necessary to build were lacking — sufficient funds, a suitable location, an efficient director of building operations, and enough competent priests to staff the seminary once it was built — he did not see how it could be the will of God. However, he left it to the priests themselves whether or not they should begin at once.[23] It was only after his death that steps were finally taken to carry out this recommendation.

* * * *

While Father Brunner was trying to regain his health and adjust matters in Rome, Mother Johanna and Sister Radygundis had set sail from America and on May 5, after a long and perilous journey, arrived in Havre. Their first move was to send word of their safe arrival to Father Brunner. In accordance with his earlier instructions they took a direct route over Paris, Strassburg, and Basle to Stein, where they paid a short visit to the Gerteis family; from Stein they went to Einsiedeln to make the usual pilgrimage and from there to Kronburg by way of Feldkirch, Austria. There they found the small community which Father Brunner had started, being directed by the resident priest, Father Joseph A. Sailer, who had been in charge of the shrine for many years. But affairs were in such a state of confusion that Mother Johanna, sensing that she was regarded as an intruder, prudently withdrew after a few days and retired with her companion to Feldkirch to await further developments.[24]

Feldkirch is close to the border of one of the smallest and friendliest countries in the world, the principality of Liechtenstein. Covering an area of little more than sixty-two square miles, this "Lilliputian land" presents a panorama of a dozen or more mountain peaks, of upland meadows and valley towns, with a low-lying plain tucked in between rugged cliffs and the foaming Rhine. Toward the northern tip rises the Schellenberg, "a low, rolling hill dwarfed by flanking mountains." Green fields patched with bright-hued flowers against a background of dark green woods effect a charming scene.[25]

Like Canton Grisons, Liechtenstein had formed a part of the Roman province, Rhaetia. The early inhabitants were Celts, who about the time of Christ were overpowered by the Romans and held subject to them for almost five hundred years. After the withdrawal of Roman troops Rhaetia fell prey to the various tribes of the Teutons until Theodoric, King of the Ostrogoths, conquered the land. Having been Christianized by the great apostle of the Rhaetians, St. Lucius, the little country remained loyal to the Catholic religion.[26] The late ruling house of Liechtenstein originated in 1712, when Prince Anthony Florian, the ruler of the House of Liechtenstein in Austria, received from his nephew, Prince Joseph Wenceslaus, the dominions of Vaduz and Schellenberg.[27] The following year Emperor Charles VI granted Prince Anthony a seat in the assembly of German princes and at the same time exalted the nobleman's joint domains of Vaduz and Schellenberg to the rank of a principality under the title of Liechtenstein.[28]

In June, 1858, when the Sisters of the Precious Blood first came to Schellenberg, the reigning prince was Alois II, but he died the following November and was succeeded by his eldest son, Prince John II (1858-1929).[29] Under the beneficent rule of this truly Catholic prince, and among the happiest and friendliest people in the world, a new house of perpetual adoration was to be established.

As soon as the neighborly Liechtensteiners got wind of the fact that there were religious in the vicinity seeking a suitable locality for a foundation, they came from nearby Schellenberg to urge the Sisters to build a convent in their village, where a church had just been completed. In response to the earnest solicitation of these simple-hearted mountain folk Mother Johanna and her companion went with them to see the new church and to investigate the possibilities of building a house near it. About fifty families, all of them devout Catholics, who hitherto had been obliged to attend the parish church at Bendern, lived within a radius of three miles from the church. The pleasant greeting *Gruess Gott,* with which young and old accosted the two Sisters, made them feel at home and inclined them to remain in these congenial and healthful surroundings.

Mother Johanna at once informed Father Brunner of their whereabouts on the Schellenberg and the prospects the place held for them. On June 12, the two priests arrived in Feldkirch and awaited the return of the Sisters, who brought back a glowing account of their experiences in Liechtenstein. All agreed that the providence of God was leading them to Schellenberg, and having considered the circumstances they decided to attempt there a foundation of perpetual adoration. It was to be the center of devotion to the Precious Blood in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland.

On Sunday, June 20, the new St. Mary's Church was dedicated. The following day, the feast of St. Aloysius, Father Maximilian offered therein for the first time the Holy Sacrifice, during which the religious received Holy Communion. The permission of Bishop Caspar von Carl of Chur having been

Kloster Schellenberg Liechtenstein

Convent of the Sisters of the Precious Blood, Schellenberg, Liechtenstein

obtained, the Blessed Sacrament was thenceforth reserved in the new church and the Sisters began that very night to make hours of adoration before the tabernacle. "The fact that everything has been settled so quickly and beyond all expectation," wrote Father Brunner on this occasion, "is a great miracle of St. Aloysius."[30]

But until the authorization of Prince Alois, who resided in Vienna, could be obtained, no plans for purchasing land and erecting a building could be made. Meanwhile the Sisters rented a small farmhouse near the church; Father Brunner found a dwelling by day and a lodging by night in the tiny sacristy beneath the church tower, while Father Maximilian slept above him in the belfry itself.[31]

About a fortnight after the Sisters' arrival on Schellenberg two candidates, Elizabeth Austermann from Westphalia and Mary Ann Kalberer from Melz, Switzerland, joined them.[32] As the number of postulants continued to increase, the Sisters found it necessary to beg food. The Jesuits of the seminary in Feldkirch, hearing of their plight, invited them to send someone twice a week to fetch meat, bread, vegetables, and other victuals from the seminary table. In return the Sisters engaged to do sewing, mending, and knitting for the Fathers and students. This neighborly practice of exchanging goods and service obtained until 1864, when the Sisters became wholly self-supporting.[33]

To provide only for the immediate needs of the growing community was not enough; the erection of a convent was imperative, since the hut in which the Sisters were living was too small and was ill-adapted to the needs of a religious house. In order to obtain funds for building, Father Brunner sent Father Maximilian and Father John Ackermann of *Drei Aehren,* who had meanwhile joined them, to the adjacent cities and towns to seek benefactors and enroll them, according to the amounts contributed, as first- or second-class members of the Confraternity of Perpetual Adoration of the Precious Blood. Prominent among the benefactors listed in the first class was Madam Caroline Hummelauer, a noblewoman from Vienna, who presented Father Brunner with a chest of church vestments and linens. She visited him in person several times, giving him money and a beautiful chalice for the convent church. Such charity bolstered the courage of the pioneers and inspired them to persevere in their efforts to establish a house of perpetual adoration against all odds.[34]

On October 3, 1858, the first step was taken toward building a convent for the Sisters. The judge[35] of Schellenberg had bought a house which he offered to Father Brunner at low cost, suggesting that it be moved and built onto the church. Twenty-two feet square and two stories high, this house contained four rooms besides a kitchen and a cellar. It was estimated that the building would accommodate from twelve to sixteen Sisters and that the total cost would amount to only 500 florins (about $200), since the parishioners had expressed their willingness to help with the moving and remodeling free of charge.[36]

Permission had to be obtained from the reigning prince, however, before any steps could be taken. The request was sent to Prince Alois in Vienna and the Sisters meanwhile made pilgrimages to *Maria Einsiedeln* to the end that the prince might grant a favorable reply. Although their prayers were not heard at this time, the building project was set in motion.

Several days later the surveyors were busy marking off the plot for the convent.[37] Father Maximilian, aided by his brother, Christian Homburger, and several willing workmen, immediately began to dig for the foundation[38] and proceeded so rapidly that hopes were entertained to have the building ready for occupancy by St. Catherine's day, November 25.[39] By the time the foundation was completed, however, cold weather had set in and further building operations had to be deferred to spring.[40]

Meanwhile the Sisters were living in the greatest poverty, depending for their sustenance on their sewing and on the alms of people who were themselves poor. But the Schellenbergers gave generously of the little they had — potatoes and corn, apples and nuts. These supplies together with the bi-weekly provisions from the Jesuits helped to solve the food problem for the time being. There were other hardships: the heating facilities were inadequate and their clothing insufficient to protect them from the raw cold winds that swept over the Schellenberg. It was a kind Providence that prompted the Jesuits one day to send up several scholastics with four warm mantles, which they laid on Father Brunner's bed with the note: "St. Martin sends these for the pioneers."[41] The spirit in which all the rigors of that Alpine winter were endured is revealed in Father Brunner's own words: "It affords me great joy to find here my beloved bride whom I had lost in America but whom I have found again — the holy poverty of Jesus Christ."[42]

Still the hundredfold reward promised to voluntary poverty was not wanting. In January Father Brunner received through Madam Kreuzburg of Cincinnati the sum of 2,401 florins ($970), a contribution of the different convents of the Congregation in America toward the buildings on Schellenberg. Compensation was also found in the spiritual benefits granted them by the Bishop of Chur: official permission to follow their rule of life, to hold public services in the church, and to have Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament each evening, beginning February 2, 1859.[43]

The return of spring brought renewed hope to the struggling community. As soon as the cold weather broke, willing hands went to work on the convent building, the good-hearted Schellenbergers again freely offering their services. By March the Sisters' community had increased to eight members — quite a crowd for their tiny dwelling. It was imperative that the new building be finished as soon as possible if the community was to continue to admit candidates. Free labor meant slow work, however, especially in the spring of the year, when farmers had their own tasks in field and garden and could give only their spare moments to charity.

In June, building operations were interrupted altogether,[44] for Father Brunner had applied for permission from the Emperor of Austria to launch a much more imposing project about a mile and a half north of Feldkirch. His plan was to build a church with a capacity of four or five hundred, and to add to it a building that would have a Sisters' chapel and convent, a school and residence for boarders and orphans, and several rooms for visitors so that in time lay retreats could be given. Funds would be needed, of course, to carry on such an extensive enterprise, but Father Brunner was encouraged by the generous donation he had received from America and he hoped to obtain more from the same source. To this end he wrote letters in which he hinted for larger sums of money to be raised by the various convents, exhorting them at the same time to greater thrift at home for the sake of this European project.

But his petition to build in Austria was twice rejected. The only sensible thing to do, therefore, was to finish the building on the Schellenberg and settle there, at least temporarily. By the end of August the Sisters were able to move into the newly erected convent.[45]

Chapter VI

LAST DAYS OF FATHER BRUNNER

TO NO one more than Father Brunner himself was it evident that his health was failing fast and that there was little hope of his returning to America. A statement which he wrote to Father Wittmer in the late summer of 1859 had a prophetic ring to it: "Neither I nor anyone else knows whether I shall live to see 1860."[1] Still he surmised that there was urgent need of his presence at home. For more than two years he had been absent, and several important affairs were calling for adjustment. Not only was he concerned about the erection of a motherhouse and seminary for priests and students and for a more thorough course of study as preparation for the priesthood; he was even more anxious about the maintenance of the spirit of religious fervor in the community as a whole.[2]

Since he was unable to go himself, he decided to send Father Maximilian back to America in his place. His "faithful Timothy," acting as his representative with delegated powers, was to visit the American convents and report the status of each to him. Father Maximilian departed with four postulants toward the middle of November, 1859,[3] leaving his ailing superior alone as chaplain, since Father Ackermann had gone the previous summer to assume the chaplaincy at Balzers.[4] On November 21, Father Brunner wrote a long circular letter.[5]

During the ensuing month he carried on single-handed as best he could. Though weak and tottering, he still managed to offer Holy Mass daily and preach to the people on Sundays. To the Sisters he continued to give the usual spiritual conferences and meditations until the day came when he was forced to exclaim: "Now I can say no more to you. I shall have to look after myself."[6] This was about the middle of December.

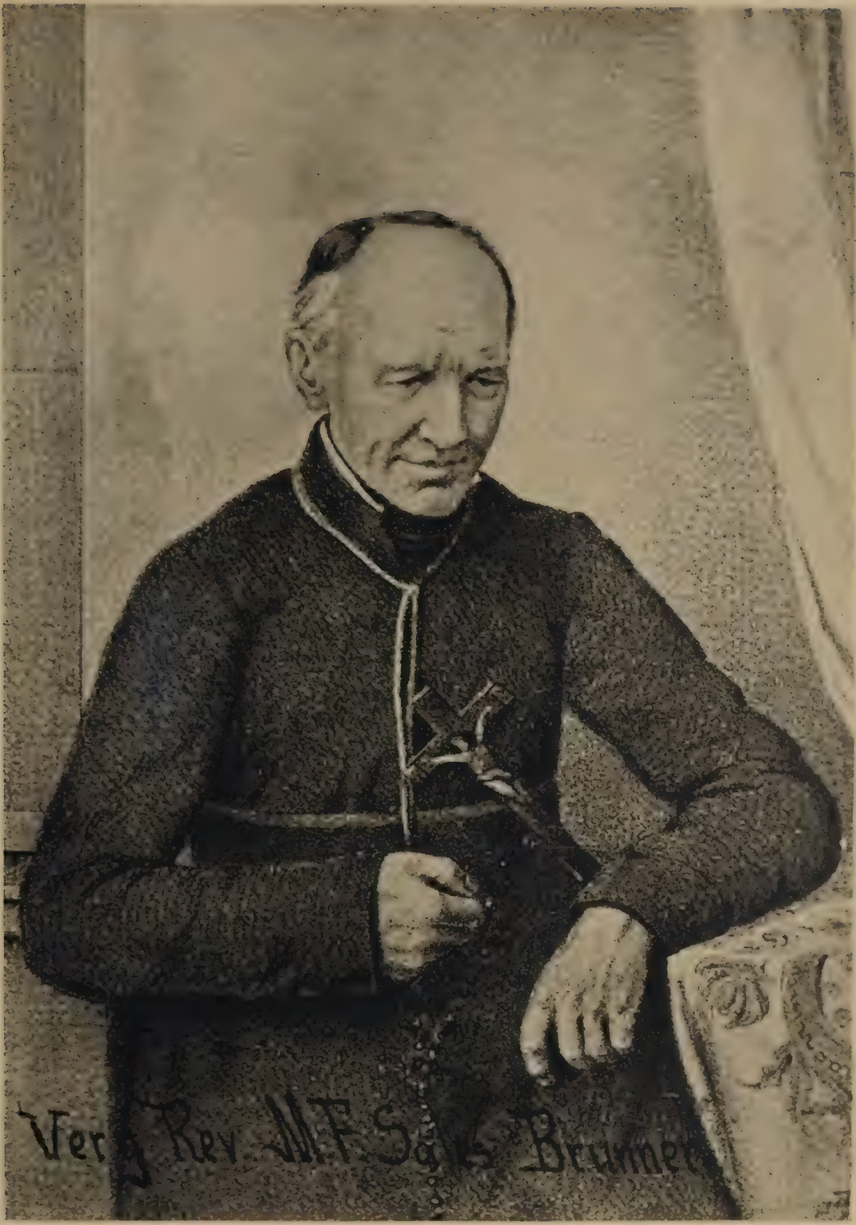
Feeling his end approaching, he asked Mother Johanna to have the Sisters begin a fervent novena for him, promising to make it with them for their intentions.

The day after the close of the novena, December 23, his condition became so serious that two physicians were summoned from Feldkirch. Although they pronounced him dangerously ill, they seemed little concerned about doing anything to relieve him. The devoted Sisters, fearing to lose their spiritual father, sent for another physician, the eminent Doctor Suter of Werdenberg, who did all in his power to save the dying priest.[7]

Sick as he was, Father Brunner insisted on rising from his lowly cot in the sacristy to offer midnight Mass on Christmas Eve so that the Sisters would not be deprived of their only source of Christmas joy. It must have been a heart-rending sight for them to see their beloved father, lately grown so old and enfeebled, making his way painfully about the altar. His faithful little server, Francis Joseph Kieber, loved to recall in after years this memorable Christmas night, when for the last time he served his beloved Father Francis de Sales, whom he had always regarded with a kind of hero worship.[8]

At nine o'clock on Christmas morning the sick pastor again forced himself from his bed to distribute Holy Communion to the Sisters and people. Seated on a chair, he performed his last liturgical act as with trembling hands he dispensed the Bread of life to the sheep of his flock.

On Monday, December 26, Father Ackermann was summoned from Balzers to administer to the dying priest, who was sinking rapidly. Father John Meyer from nearby Mauren also proved a staunch friend in this time of need. For such marks of friendship Father Brunner, who was conscious to the last, showed himself most grateful. But his sweetest consolation in those last suffering hours was the thought of the Mother of God to whom he had been so thoroughly devoted all his life. During his illness he had asked to have her picture hung opposite his bed and there his gaze often rested lovingly. It would


Very Rev M F Sales Brunner

First Provincial in America, 1844-1859

not be long now until his Queen would summon her faithful "court chaplain" into her presence.

The next day, the feast of St. John, Father Brunner rallied sufficient strength to pen with shaking hand a last message to the Congregation in America. It was brief, but significant: "Lazarus whom you love is sick. I beseech the whole community to pray for me. May the holy will of God be done! But if you pray earnestly for me in all the houses, I shall soon be well again; yes, even before you begin to pray."[9]

The end came, however, long before that little missive reached its destination. At ten o'clock on the morning of December 29, 1859, Father Brunner willingly gave back his soul, "fire-tried in the furnace of tribulation," to his God. In less than two weeks he would have celebrated his sixty-fifth birthday.

The Sisters were grieved beyond words at the loss of their spiritual father; it was a week or more after the funeral before Mother Johanna could muster enough courage to write the details of his death and burial to the community in America.

> Greetings through the Precious Blood to all the members of the Precious Blood in America.
>
> With trembling hand I take my pen to impart to you very sad news. On December 29 at 10 A. M., Almighty God was pleased to take to Himself our good spiritual father.
>
> Everyone shares our irretrievable loss. Although the departed one had seldom left his nook in the sacristy of the church at Schellenberg, his deep piety and outstanding virtues were known far and wide. He was venerated as a saint by all the people.
>
> Through a request of ours, sponsored by the reverend pastor at Bendern, permission was granted to have the remains buried in the church before the altar of the Immaculate Conception. A crypt over six feet deep was made of stone and lined with bricks. After the body had been lowered into it, the tomb was vaulted with bricks.

On January 3 at 10 A. M., the remains were placed in a coffin of larchwood. Twelve priests, a Capuchin, and an immense crowd of people were present at the funeral, thereby testifying publicly to the great esteem in which the deceased was held by all. A solemn funeral procession was formed. A dignitary and spiritual counselor from Brixen officiated at the Requiem Mass and burial service. . . . An honorable canon from Chur spoke the eulogy and an old acquaintance of our deceased father, the Reverend Martin Durgini, gave an impressive funeral sermon in which he truly and beautifully portrayed the extraordinary qualities of our departed father.

That our good God willed to call our unforgettable father to Himself is evident from what follows. The day before he took sick, he summoned Sister Radygundis and me and said: "I have a premonition of death. I believe I shall die soon. Let's make a novena — I for you and you for me. May the will of God be done!"

Shortly after the novena was finished, he became worse. Only with the greatest effort and exertion was he able to offer Holy Mass on Christmas Eve, and immediately afterward he was forced to go to bed. At nine o'clock he again rose with great effort, and seated in a chair, distributed Holy Communion for the last time to us poor Sisters, since we had no other priest. From that time on, he was unable to get up. On the last morning he received the sacraments of the dying. The calmness with which he suffered and the cheerfulness of his countenance affected us Sisters and all who visited him. He never complained of his sufferings.

We at once summoned three doctors to his bedside. But human science and skill availed nothing. God wished to have for Himself the soul of our good father, which was adorned with so many virtues. I, and certainly all the Sisters with me, would be inconsolable at our irreparable loss, did not faith in the life to come give us strength and consolation. But what comfort, even joy, must fill all of our hearts to know that besides our blessed founder, Gaspar del Bufalo, we have in our departed Father Salesius a powerful intercessor before the throne of God for our Congregation.

December 28 is the anniversary of our blessed founder Gaspar, and December 29 that of our deceased Father Salesius.

Shortly before his death he was concerned about the community, for he said to me repeatedly: "Continue the work which has been begun — it is the will of God. The good God will certainly help you. The superiors in America should consider it their duty to help us out here, should we lack temporal necessities. Therefore, advance and persevere in the work begun — that should be the watchword of all."

A moment before his death (I was alone with him), he blessed me with holy water. He also gave me his cross and rosary, and these brought me more joy than anything else in the world. I count it a great happiness to have been with him day and night until he breathed his last.

I hope that everything will go well here. We have many, very many, who are deeply devoted to us, and the number of our friends is daily increasing. The civil authorities are remarkably well-disposed toward us. The pastor gives us every assurance that he will aid us in every way. The Most Reverend Bishop of Chur even sends a canon to console us two poor things. Also the Jesuits and Capuchins — everyone promises to help us. You see we are not forsaken, and the good God will continue to care for us.

I will close now, recommending our departed father and all of us to your prayers. You will please pardon me for having put off writing so long. It was impossible for me to write immediately after his death — that you can well imagine. I had to wait until I was somewhat recovered and calmed down. The Reverend John Ackermann is now with us.

I must add that our deceased father looked more beautiful and friendly on the sixth day after his death than he did even when he was well. I am firmly convinced that he is now praying for us in heaven.

Again greeting all of you and recommending ourselves to your prayers,

JOHANNA[10]

Father Brunner's tomb was visited by hundreds. Its inscription, bearing witness to the high esteem in which he was held in Europe, may be freely translated as follows:

Here in this Crypt rests
The Very Reverend Titular Father
Mary Francis de Sales Brunner
born at Muemliswil, Canton Solothurn
January 10, 1795
Apostolic Missionary
Founder, Superior, and General Director of the
Convents of the Congregation of Priests, Brothers and
Sisters of the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ
in Germany, Alsace, and North America
who died here in the odor of sanctity
December 29, 1859
R. I. P.

Rest, noble priest, from thy onerous burden,
From pastoral duties well done. Acclaimed
Ornament and prince of thy priestly station,
For thy children a light with love inflamed.
Here they weep silent tears at thy grave,
grief-incited,
But beyond they'll find joy, with thee e'er united.[11]

* * * *

One cannot interpret the life of Father Brunner without taking into account the versatility of his genius. He was a man endowed by nature and grace with all the qualities of an apostle combined with the other-worldliness of a contemplative. This duality of his character was perhaps the cause of the greatest struggles of his life: it made him out to be an enigma to many who knew him only at a distance; it created for him a score of enemies, especially among the clergy who could not reconcile the apparent inconsistencies of his actions. It is no slight praise to say that his best friends were those who knew him most intimately — his immediate superiors, who discerned the sterling qualities of the man under a somewhat brusque exterior.

Gifted with a keen mind, Father Brunner was alert to turn to good account the educational opportunities offered him from his boyhood days. His early devotion to study, his ready acquisition of languages, his ambition to establish a boys' school at Loewenberg based on sound pedagogical principles, his several published works — all point to the fact that, far from holding intellectual pursuits in contempt, he championed the cause of a thorough education. The charge of neglect in the preparation of aspirants to the priesthood which some made against him was one of the greatest trials of his declining years. No one deplored more than he a situation that rose not from choice but from force of circumstances — lack of time, of books, of professors.

Father Brunner's mind, while at times strangely illogical, was again rigidly methodical. With meticulous thoroughness he was forever analyzing his motives and weighing the possible consequences of his actions, setting down in writing the *pros* and *cons* as in a brief for argumentation. Knowing the inestimable value of a good intention, he diligently searched his soul, especially before an important undertaking, to forestall any base movement of the will; to make assurance doubly sure, he committed his good intentions to writing. To square his actions with Christian principles and to perform them from the highest motive possible — the pure love of God — seems to have been the constant aim of his life.

To do this consistently, however, presupposed a total lack of human respect and the courage to accept criticism. He was aided in this by his strong, inflexible will inherited from his "vertebrate" mother, who tolerated no half-measures either in herself or in her children. By her he had been trained from earliest childhood to a habit of self-denial, which caused him to become in later years the inexorable foe of all softness and ease, the forerunners of laxity. He took literally the words of Christ: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me" (Matt. XVI, 24), and he expected his spiritual children to do the same. His letters to them sound again and again the clarion call to self-denial, mortification, death to the old man.

As poverty was the foundation upon which he built his religious Congregation, self-denial, demanded by hard work, was the bulwark designed to protect it from the spirit of worldliness. The spirit of work is part of the legacy he bequeathed to his followers; it is the spirit that breathes through the Rule he wrote for them; it is now, as it has ever been, the *esprit de corps* upon which the very existence of the community depends. It alone explains the seemingly inexhaustible reserves of energy, the amazing capacity for labor which enabled Father Brunner over a period of forty years to spend himself and be spent in the sacred ministry despite his ill-health. The simple encomium under his name in the death register of the Congregation bears witness to his life of toil: "By his incredible labors he laid the foundation of the American Congregation of the Precious Blood, which he copiously bedewed with his sweat."[12] His manifold labors may well seem incredible unless we take into account the fire of love burning in his soul — love of God, love of souls — which gave them their motive power. And this fire was nourished and kept alive by sacrifice and by prayer.

Father Brunner was pre-eminently a man of prayer. Prayer was as natural to him as respiration. His life was a continuous prayer, flowing over into the souls of others and fructifying all with which it came in contact. His piety was dynamic: it impelled him to undertake great things for God — things which seemed in the eyes of the world sheer folly. *Dominus providebit* was his watchword. Although he met with failure again and again and heard on all sides the taunts of criticism as he went down to meet it, his trust in God was unshaken; it became greater as his self-confidence decreased.

The devoted son of a saintly mother, he set himself to carry out her dying wish until he drew his own last breath. To spread devotion to the Precious Blood of the Savior by multiplying houses of perpetual adoration, where this price of man's redemption would be continually offered to the Eternal Father in atonement and supplication, was his ceaseless endeavor. Such foundations numbered eleven at the time of his death — not an inglorious achievement if one considers the handicaps, financial and otherwise, under which he labored. With reference to his work in this country, he may well be called the "Herald of the Precious Blood"[13] in America, the title that was given the blessed founder, Gaspar del Bufalo, in Italy.

The gem that shone most brilliantly in the crown of his priestly virtues was his tender, lifelong devotion to the Mother of God, a devotion that was an essential of his spiritual life. His love of Mary revealed itself not so much in exterior practices in her honor as in a sincere endeavor to imitate her virtues: her humility, by a genuine self-abasement; her obedience, by the joyous *fiat* ever bursting from his lips; her fraternal charity, by a constant plea for the *cor unum et animam unam* among his confreres; her love of God, by trying to make that the supreme motive of his own actions and by encouraging his followers to become so many glowing coals from which others may catch the fire of divine love.[14]

Like all men of enterprising character, Father Brunner has come in for his full share of criticism. There are those today who accuse him of having been guilty of parsimony, of harshness, of lack of interest in the American Congregation because of his sojourns in Europe, prolonged over a period of ten years; some, having heard him more often discredited than praised for his efforts, are perhaps inclined to say with the late Very Reverend August Seifert: "Mother Brunner was undoubtedly a saint, but I am not so sure of Father Brunner."[15]

That the zealous missionary did have his faults goes without saying. The reiteration of his claim to sole authority in the Congregation, even when he was absent for several years at a time, does seem dictatorial. A certain vacillation of character may be read into his several changes of state and frequent changes of abode. His upholding the authority of Father Joseph

Albrecht against that of his own duly appointed representative, Father John Wittmer, especially in the light of the awful calamity which this same Father Joseph later brought upon the community by his scandalous conduct, may, in the judgment of some, convict Father Brunner of partiality motivated by mercenary considerations. There *are* harsh expressions in some of his letters; he *was* thrifty almost to penury; his actions *did* seem at times to be at variance with his ideals. But who would venture to assert that such admissions are conclusive evidence against Father Brunner's very real greatness? It is difficult, to say the least, to analyze the hidden motives of a man's actions, which are known fully to God alone. Certainly no one cares to be the "devil's advocate," especially in the case of a man who has as much written testimony in his favor as Father Brunner.

Let us suppose, however, that he was actually guilty of the accusations made against him and of more besides. The fact remains, as his letters and writings indubitably testify, that despite his faults — perhaps because of them in the light of the humility they engendered — he was an instrument which God deigned to use, to extend His kingdom to at least one little corner of the earth; to lead to His altar scores of young levites; to consecrate to His service hundreds of pure virgins, "the lambs and brides of Jesus Christ";[16] to encourage these and all souls who would come under their influence to a fuller participation in the divine Christ-life, which is the birthright of every Christian whose robes have been washed in the Blood of the Lamb.

Finally, "by their fruits you shall know them." The Congregation of the Precious Blood in America — the community of the priests and Brothers and that of the Sisters — is flourishing today after steady growth for a century. This fact is a clear indication that the tiny seed sown in far-off Switzerland, and later transplanted in this country, was cultivated and brought to maturity not by human efforts alone. God saw fit to bless the toil of His zealous servant by the rain of His grace and the sunshine of His love. And "where love is, there God is also."

Chapter VII

AN AMERICAN CURE D'ARS

FATHER ANDREW KUNKLER was appointed in 1860 by Don Merlini to officiate temporarily as general director in America. His appointment was confirmed the following year by the election held in Greenwood in conformity with the revised Rule.[1]

A more learned man undoubtedly could have been found to fill this important position, but certainly none more truly virtuous and more universally beloved than "good Father Kunkler." A contemporary of St. John Vianney, he may well be styled an "American Curé d'Ars." His life bears many points of resemblance to that of the French saint. Like the now famous Curé, he was pastor of a country parish for many years, a thoroughly devoted shepherd of his flock, over which he exerted a marked influence for good. In the confessional, in the pulpit, in the classroom, at the bedside of the sick, and in ordinary human relations, he won all hearts by his simplicity of word and manner, and above all by the sincere love that radiated from a heart intensely aglow with divine charity. The indefatigable zeal for souls, the tender devotion for the little ones of his flock, the Christlike humility under false accusation and rebuke — all these, found in so eminent a degree in the French Curé, shone conspicuously in Father Kunkler.[2] "He was," in the opinion of Father August Seifert, "a most lovable man and the most celebrated of all the American missionaries."[3]

Born at Glottertal, Baden, on December 4, 1824, Andrew Kunkler came to this country at the age of twenty-one. Three years later (1848) he was ordained by Bishop Amadeus Rappe of Cleveland in the convent chapel at New Riegel. During the first two years of his priesthood he labored successively in the parishes at Glandorf, St. Rose, and St. John. His heroism during the cholera epidemic of 1849 has already been noted. In 1850, though only twenty-six years of age, he was appointed to St. Augustine's Church, Minster, Ohio, the largest parish then in the charge of the Congregation. There he remained as pastor and local superior for thirty-five years, during fourteen of which (1860-1874) he also served the community as provincial.[4]

As spiritual director of the Sisters, he endeavored to keep alive the spirit of his predecessor, whom he had always greatly admired. His letters to them breathe the same earnestness of appeal to the higher life and the same practical wisdom that characterized the founder's admonitions. "I hope," Father Kunkler wrote to the Sisters on the eve of the first anniversary of Father Brunner's death, "that you often think of him in prayer, in Holy Mass and Communion, in chapel, in the recreation room, in the refectory, and in every other place, and that you are trying to make his counsels and blessings fruitful in your souls. How often he said: 'Children, be humble, be obedient, be fervent in prayer, in devotion to Mary, in adoration of the Precious Blood; and observe the Rule conscientiously.' "[5]

On appointing Father Kunkler general director, Don Merlini enjoined upon him the carrying out of the recommendation that had been made to Father Brunner on his last trip to Rome — the erection of a building to serve as a seminary for students and a community house for priests and Brothers,[6] entirely independent of the Sisters.

The community seminary, St. Aloysius', which during the years had been moved from place to place as circumstances demanded, was then at Himmelgarten. Reverend Joseph Dwenger, ordained in Cincinnati on September 3, 1859, was director of studies there. In 1860 he was commissioned by Father Kunkler to negotiate for some property upon which to build the new seminary in accordance with the instructions from Rome. Through a shrewd business man from Celina, Father Dwenger finally prevailed upon a Mr. Smith from

THE VERY REVEREND ANDREW KUNKLER
Second Provincial, 1860-1874

Greenville to sell him the Emlin Institute, an old, dilapidated school for liberated Negroes, located at Carthagena, Ohio. Had the owner, a bigoted Protestant, known to what purpose his property was to be put, he would never have closed the deal. As it was, he found out too late that the Negro school had been remodeled and converted into a Catholic seminary.[7]

In Father Dwenger's hands the courses of study in the new St. Charles Seminary were improved. In 1861 he wrote to the *Catholic Telegraph:* "We have daily classes in Dogma, Moral and Philosophy; three times a week, Church History; twice a week, Christian Doctrine, Ancient History, and Geography. It is not much, but surely it is progress." And it was Father Kunkler who was backing the efforts of the energetic young rector: "Father Kunkler often repeats: 'Form a learned and efficient clergy, not minding whether it takes a year longer, or not; but above all be most strict with regard to the solid virtue and piety of the students.' "[8]

Father Kunkler was also concerned about the proper education of the Sisters who taught in the parochial schools. Under his direction a normal school was opened at Maria Stein in 1862. Sister Josephine Boetsch (later Mother General), Sister Nathalia Josberger (afterward novice mistress), Sister Euthalia Wolfert, and Sister Seraphina Ellerbrock became the first students of the normal school, and Sister Adelaide Schmerge, the first teacher.[9]

The efficiency and progressiveness of Father Kunkler as an administrator were further evidenced by the several substantial convents of brick that replaced old, makeshift buildings. Besides a new chapel at Maria Stein (1861), there were brick convents erected at Mary's Home (1867), at Greenwood (1868), and at Glandorf (1869), a new convent chapel at Egypt, and a new pilgrimage chapel of Maria Steig at Thompson (1870). Also in 1870 three new altars of wood, artistically carved by an expert wood sculptor, Mr. Caspar Stelzer of St. John's, Maria Stein, were installed in the chapel of the motherhouse.[10]

With all the blessings that God showered down upon His faithful servant, He did not fail to send the greatest one of all — the cross. Twice at least, during his second term of office, Father Kunkler was weighed down with a burden of trial heavy enough to crush an ordinary man.

The first blow was struck in 1866, when Father Joseph Albrecht, with a faction of Sisters and Brothers whom he had completely won over to his cause, broke with the community. To understand more fully the causes that led to this schism, it is necessary to go back a number of years.

It will be remembered that Joseph Albrecht came to America in 1848. He was the husband of Mother Mary Ann Albrecht, first superioress of the Sisters in America, and father of Sister Rosalie, who died in New Riegel as a young professed Sister. Before he met Father Brunner in Baden, Joseph Albrecht had been mayor of his home town, Kirchenzarten; a man of indomitable will and tireless ambition, he won for himself wealth and prominence. Then he became acquainted with Father Brunner, whom he came to look upon as his spiritual director, and offered to handle the priest's money matters for him. After his separation from his wife and her entrance into the Loewenberg convent, Joseph Albrecht engaged in studies under the direction of different priests, perhaps with the notion of entering the priesthood himself. As a matter of fact, he was ordained by Bishop Rappe a year after his arrival in America, in June, 1849, at the age of forty-nine. The first years of his ministry were spent as assistant at Thompson and outlying missions; then at Valley City, where he established a parochial school. About 1854 he was appointed superior of the Himmelgarten convent, upon which he expended a part of his private possessions, and at the same time pastor of St. Joseph's Church.[11]

Owing to his disposition, which was inclined toward rigor, self-will and scrupulosity, Father Albrecht presented a problem from the beginning. But the Brothers and Sisters in his charge, as well as the parishioners of St. Joseph's, held him in the highest esteem. Even miracles were ascribed to him. Father Brunner, too, greatly admired the man and placed implicit confidence in him. "As much as possible," he wrote to Father Wittmer from Kronburg, "let P. Joseph Maria manage affairs in Himmelgarten according to his own discretion; thus I hope everything will go well. . . . Our P. Joseph Maria has always been in every respect the blessing of God in Himmelgarten. He has ever before his eyes the poverty of Jesus Christ, His patience and meekness; and by his example inspires humility and the love of God, and what good does anything else do us?"[12]

Yet Father Albrecht was the cause of much complaint on the part of Father Wittmer, who was having difficulties with him during Father Brunner's absence. Was Father Brunner blinded to the real character of the man? His letters show that he was at least baffled at times, scarcely knowing how to advise those who had to deal directly with him. "I don't know what is the matter with Fr. Jos. M. Albrecht," he wrote on one occasion. "If he is troubled by the evil spirit and therefore wishes to visit Fr. Oswald, perhaps it would be a good thing."[13] Again he wrote, "I always pray for Joseph Maria, especially, and even though his life is a mystery to me, I always feel particularly drawn to him, for we are of the same spirit."[14]

There is no doubt that Father Albrecht was an eccentric character — abnormal, one is tempted to say. Rigorous to the extreme, distrustful of the hierarchy, obstinate in his views, he pursued his own course of action, which he considered the only right one. Others too began to think "holy Father Joseph" could not be wrong. The psychological influence he was thus able to exercise over his subjects largely accounts for his success in gaining a following when the crisis came.

It was brought about in this way. One Sunday morning in the summer of 1866 he publicly inveighed against the wearing of hoop skirts in church. When some of the women reappeared with the offensive garb for Vespers in the afternoon, suiting action to words he literally drove a group of screaming girls from the church with a hickory stick. The incident was reported to Archbishop Purcell. When the archbishop laid down certain conditions to be fulfilled, Father Albrecht refused to comply. Then the archbishop suspended him.

His suspension was the spark needed to enkindle the priest's smouldering hatred of ecclesiastical authority. With fifteen Sisters, eight Brothers, and a number of parishioners who were willing to cast their lot with his, he planned to form a new community.[15] This, he knew, was impossible in the Cincinnati diocese; he would have to move away. Leaving the Himmelgarten convent, Father Albrecht, with his followers, settled temporarily on a farm a short distance from the convent. He apparently realized meanwhile the error of his ways, for he wrote from there the following apology to Archbishop Purcell:

> Experience teaches. I am sorry for having transgressed. The reason was I could not agree, as you are aware, with some of the Congregation of the Precious Blood in Ohio; and for peace sake I would prefer to live in the wilderness. My wish is to be submissive to Your Reverence and to all Cath. bishops. My desire is to go to Minnesota and establish a convent there. At present there are some of the Brothers, as you are aware, who bought some land. As to the remarks I have made in St. Joseph's, I recall all I have said or done that displeases you.
>
> I humbly ask my restoration and the necessary papers for leaving the diocese.[16]

Father Albrecht and his adherents did not remain long in Ohio. Their destination was Minnesota, but they stopped on their way in Wisconsin, leaving twelve of the Sisters with a Father Oswald for the winter. The rest of the colony, making their way with wagons over the old Crow Wing trail, finally arrived in Otter Tail County, Minnesota, where they purchased a plot of 700 acres. There at a place called Rush Lake they built a convent and a church, dedicated to "Our Mother of Miracles."[17]

Soon after their arrival, Father Francis Pierz, a missionary of the Indian reservation at Crow Wing, Minnesota, visited Father Albrecht and tried to induce him to seek reconciliation with ecclesiastical authorities. The zealous missionary took it upon himself to write to Father Kunkler, asking pardon in behalf of Father Albrecht and requesting his legal dismissal from the Congregation and, with the sanction of Archbishop Purcell, from the Cincinnati archdiocese. Father Kunkler answered that he could grant legal dismissal only under the following conditions:

1. That Father Albrecht retract the scandal by a personal letter to be read to the congregation of St. Joseph's and to the people of the neighboring parishes.
2. That he claim nothing from the Congregation of the Precious Blood but what would be given him voluntarily.
3. That he send back all the Sisters, who would be obliged to recommence their novitiate. [Only three of the Brothers and six of the Sisters had taken the oath of fidelity.]
4. That he never pretend to have permission (which would never be granted) to found a convent in the name of the Congregation of the Precious Blood.[18]

Father Albrecht failed to comply with these demands, as subsequent events prove.

The old Indian missionary had also prevailed upon him to become reconciled with Bishop Grace of St. Paul, who on hearing of the activities of the recalcitrant priest in his diocese had deprived him of his faculties. To this Father Albrecht agreed, and with a letter of introduction from the missionary, set out on foot for the journey of two hundred miles to St. Paul. Arriving there, he found that the bishop was not at home, a circumstance that he unjustly ascribed to ill will of the prelate toward him. More confirmed in his obstinacy than ever, he returned to Rush Lake and continued to exercise his priestly functions, except the hearing of confessions. Eventually all but fifteen families in the town left their own parish, St. Joseph's, to join Father Albrecht.[19]

In November, 1871, Bishop Grace sent the Jesuit missionary, Father Francis X. Weniger, to preach a mission at Rush Lake in order to bring back the people to their own parish. The result was that only fifteen families remained loyal to Father Albrecht, who became so enraged that he retaliated by beginning to hear confessions. Thereupon his church was placed under interdict and he incurred the severest of all ecclesiastical penalties, that of *excommunicatus vitandus*.[20]

The sequel of his story is a sad commentary on the weakness of human nature that has become victimized by pride. In May, 1879, the convent, chapel, and barns were completely destroyed by a fire that was thought to have been of incendiary origin. Since the buildings carried no insurance, the colony suffered a heavy loss. As a result of this severe blow, Father Albrecht, then an old man of seventy-nine, became seriously ill. During his illness, Father Godfrey Schlachter visited him, hoping to bring him to make his peace with the Church. The aged priest was on the point of yielding to the persuasion of the missionary, but on second thought he said, "If I do, what will my people say? No, I cannot."[21]

Five years later, in the spring of 1884, Joseph Albrecht died apparently unreconciled to the Church. Some hold that he did receive the sacraments at a mission half a year before his death, but there is not sufficient evidence to substantiate this statement. The fact that his body remained for some time incorrupt after his death strengthened the conviction of his followers that Father Joseph was a saint.

Of his adherents, some remained recalcitrant after his death, were subsequently banished from Minnesota, and wandered as far west as Oregon. There they dragged out a miserable existence under the ban of the Church and subject to a few tyrannical leaders, all of them seculars, who had set themselves up as superiors but were no better than swindlers. Others, realizing that they had been duped, either returned to the motherhouse or joined communities in the West.[22]

The whole affair is only one of many similar incidents recorded in church history. And just as schisms, heresies, and other scandals that happen in the Church do not detract an iota from her essential character but rather prove more strongly her divine origin, so the fact that the Congregation survived this storm shows that Christ had been guiding the little bark and by His almighty power had saved it from utter destruction. Before it should arrive in safe harbor it was destined to weather other tempests.

Another trial that weighed heavily on Father Kunkler during his second term of office was the financial distress occasioned by the failure of the California province to meet a staggering debt on a college it was erecting. In 1869, Father Patrick Henneberry, while giving missions in California, was requested by the bishop and clergy to establish a province of the Congregation on the west coast. Having obtained permission from Don Merlini and been named provincial of the new province, Father Patrick opened a seminary at Eureka, California, which was to be independent of the Ohio province. Since the seminary had no income, he found it necessary to build a college at Rohnersville, twenty-four miles from Eureka, to support the infant project.[23] But St. Joseph's College failed after a few years, and the Ohio province was asked by Rome to assume the huge debt of $30,000 that had accumulated in the meantime.[24] It was left to Father Kunkler's successor, Father Bernard Austermann, to bear the main brunt of this debt, which by dint of the strictest economy he almost entirely liquidated. Father Patrick, however, heroically undertook to reimburse the Congregation as far as possible by proceeds from missions which he gave in Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa.[25]

While the attempt of the Congregation to gain a foothold in the West was doomed to early failure, its efforts to expand in the sunny South was crowned with more success. The state of Tennessee was for more than twenty-five years the scene of fruitful labor on the part of the Congregation to apply the merits of the Precious Blood to numerous souls, and thus prepare the soil for the thriving Catholicity that has since taken root and blossomed in the "Big Bend State."

LAWRENCEBURG, TENNESSEE
(1873-1917)

In the late sixties of the last century a society of craftsmen met in Cincinnati to discuss labor questions. The unemployment situation, especially in the cities, was acute at the time, and people were being urged, as now, to engage in agriculture. To encourage this back-to-the-land movement, officers were elected to buy up tracts of land in unsettled districts and portion them into small farms to be distributed by lottery. This was the beginning of the Cincinnati Homestead Society.

One such tract of land was purchased near the town of Lawrenceburg, Lawrence County, Tennessee. There a small house, formerly a store, was being used for a church, and there were signs of growing Catholicity in the district. Father H. Heuser was the first pastor. Three months after his arrival, however, he went to Loretto, Tennessee, a distance of fourteen miles, to establish a new colony and found a mission church there.

The epidemic of cholera in Nashville and of yellow fever in Memphis had thinned the ranks of the young priests who were destined for this growing mission field. Having no one to send to Lawrenceburg to replace Father Heuser, Bishop Feehan of Nashville applied for help to Father Kunkler. Father Bernard Austermann and Father Xavier Griessmeier were sent, near the end of November, 1871, to investigate conditions. They returned with a favorable report: it was a field that needed cultivation and one that would require hard work, but it promised a glorious harvest in the future.

On February 29, 1872, Father Xavier Griessmeier and Father Rochus Schuele, with two lay Brothers of the Society of the Precious Blood, arrived at Pulaski, Tennessee, where they were met by a large delegation of parishioners from Lawrenceburg, twenty miles away. The following morning they were escorted to their new home. As they entered Lawrenceburg another contingent, headed by a band, welcomed them and led them to the church. Father Griessmeier thanked the people for their hearty welcome and gave them his blessing. A large frame building near the church, once the home of a slaveholder but now deserted and neglected, was assigned to the priests and Brothers for a residence.

As a result of the successful work of the Homestead Society, immigrants had poured into the district so rapidly that the church had become too small. A new frame building was therefore started that spring and plans were made to have it dedicated on May 18, 1872, the feast of Pentecost. Although the church was far from completion on that date, an elaborate celebration was held. On the vigil of the feast the bishop was conducted triumphantly to St. Joseph's by enthusiastic parishioners. Touched by their faith and loyalty, he remarked in his address to them: "It is the same as in the old country. . . . Never before in my episcopate have I received such a cordial welcome." People gathered from far and near the next day for the celebration. The dedication of the unfinished church took place in the morning, followed by a Pontifical High Mass during which the children received First Communion. The same day the bishop administered Confirmation and blessed the cemetery.

The organization of the parish, which consisted of from ninety to a hundred families, proved to be a slow process, involving complete spiritual regeneration. The problem was finally solved "through the help of St. Joseph and our blessed Mother Mary," as the pastor asserted. "Especially did we achieve much by establishing confraternities — of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Sweet Heart of Mary, the Apostleship of Prayer, the scapular, the living rosary — and through the prayers of the Sisters and Brothers."[26]

Father Griessmeier knew that education was the only means of making the organization of the parish complete and permanent. To this end he had the old church enlarged and turned into a school. His next problem was to find teachers. This was solved the following June, 1872, when Very Reverend Andrew Kunkler, Reverend Bernard Austermann, and Reverend Augustine Reichert visited the mission and the question of procuring teachers was raised. They decided to build a convent for the Sisters of the Precious Blood near by and to entrust the parish school to them. But Father Kunkler had another purpose in mind in bringing the Sisters into this mission field. He was confident that the perpetual adoration of the Precious Blood would bear abundant fruit in souls. To use his own words: "I desire that the Precious Blood should also be adored here; for this reason I have given my consent — it is the will of God."[27]

To further this project two hundred acres were donated by the Homestead Society and seventy-one more purchased. Plans were made to erect a convent on the newly acquired land. Later twelve acres were added to the south of the plot. Building was begun late that summer, and the convent was ready to be occupied the next spring. On March 25, 1873, several Sisters arrived from Maria Camp in the Cleveland diocese, where the convent had recently been given up. Sister Margaret Kressing, who had been superior, held the same office in Lawrenceburg, and Sister Donata Wessels was put in charge of the school.

Through the zealous efforts of the Fathers of the Precious Blood two log churches were erected in 1873: Holy Trinity, ten miles from Lawrenceburg, and St. Mary's, eight miles away. Both mission churches were attended by Fathers from the convent once a month.

As time went on, improvements were made in the Lawrenceburg parish. In 1883, the completion of the Louisville and Nashville railroad greatly facilitated traveling and transportation, thus contributing to the growth of the town. A brick church was begun in 1889 by Father Isidore Hengartner, who found it very difficult to raise the funds required to finish the building. To add to his embarrassment, a suspended priest accused him of having appropriated $5,000 of the parish money. Father Hengartner was forced to leave the place. Father Kilian Schill, failing to reconcile the parishioners, now divided into two factions, left in August, 1889, after he had the parish put under interdict. Peace was restored only after Father Hengartner was vindicated during a mission held by Father Godfrey Schlachter toward the end of the year 1889, when Father Edward Jacob was pastor. In 1891 Father Griessmeier returned and completed the church.

Meanwhile the old convent buildings were replaced by more substantial ones of brick, which gave the convent the appearance of a town. "The Town of the Seven Houses" the city folks jokingly called it, and its inmates, "the happiest people on earth."[28]

ST. MARY'S CONVENT
NEW EINSIEDELN, TENNESSEE
(1874-1893)

The success of Sacred Heart Convent, Lawrenceburg, led to an offer from the government of a tract of land near Holy Trinity Church to the Congregation of the Precious Blood. The offering was not accepted, but later the Congregation purchased 700 acres ten miles from Lawrenceburg.

In March, 1874, Father John Wittmer and Father Andrew Stiefvater, with five or six Brothers and several Sisters, came to begin the new convent, St. Mary's of New Einsiedeln. It was a most difficult task to clear the long-neglected land, which was a mass of tangled underbrush and thorns. Moreover, the barren soil produced poor crops.

Until a building was provided, the pioneers were obliged to live with private families. Materials for their own block house had to be carried a distance of ten miles over almost impassable roads. In the face of indescribable hardships they kept up courage until they could move into their own home. A few months afterward a second house was erected for the Fathers and Brothers. Since the parish, consisting of only ten families, could be accommodated in the convent chapel, it was deemed unnecessary for the time being to build a church.

But by 1878, plans were made to build a church and school, and money was raised for the purpose. A plot of forty acres one mile from the convent was purchased, and an old store two miles away was bought and moved to the new property. However, owing to a dispute that arose among the people relative to the disposal of surplus funds, the church was never built. Some wanted the money to go to St. Mary's Convent; others demanded that it be given to Sacred Heart Convent at Lawrenceburg. Bishop Feehan finally settled the matter by directing that the funds be used for the upkeep of St. Mary's Chapel at New Einsiedeln.

As early as 1874 Sister Irmgardis Dick took charge of the small district school at this mission. In 1882 the Sisters opened a convent school for girls, but the number enrolled was never over thirty. Later the convent and district schools were merged into one.

St. Mary's of New Einsiedeln was the first of the Tennessee convents to be abandoned. Conditions there grew less and less favorable until in August, 1893, Father John Wittmer and the Sisters left. The parishioners then joined the parish at Lawrenceburg.[29]

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE
(1874-1899)

The same year that saw St. Mary's Convent and Chapel erected at New Einsiedeln brought the Fathers and Sisters of the Precious Blood to Nashville to take charge of the church and school of Assumption parish. The most consoling feature of this mission was the large number of converts that were brought into the Church through the instrumentality of the Congregation. Many of these converts joined the Dominican nuns, whose motherhouse, connected with St. Cecilia's Academy, is located in this city. When in 1899 the Sisters of the Precious Blood were removed from Nashville, the Dominicans replaced them.[30]

LORETTO, TENNESSEE
(1876-1904)

The mission of Loretto was founded in 1871, as stated before, by Father H. Heuser. Because of poor health and financial difficulties he resigned it five years later to the Fathers of the Precious Blood. Father Rochus Schuele was the first pastor. A small frame church and school had been erected previously, but teachers were needed. In September, 1876, Sister Donata came from Nashville to direct the school, and several other Sisters were sent from the motherhouse at Maria Stein. A convent and chapel dedicated to the Sacred Heart was subsequently built under the regime of Father Alphonse Laux.

In 1888, the Very Reverend Bernard Austermann, the ex-provincial, was appointed superior. During his term of office several projects were launched. One was a flour mill built at Blue Water (a creek about two and a half miles from Loretto), so that the people would not have to transport their grain thirty or forty miles to be ground. The mill flourished for several years. After the health of the manager failed, it was moved to the convent grounds.

The convent farm proved a failure, and the whole lot of 400 acres with "buildings, stock, teams, and implements" was sold for $1,100. A half-year later, they would have brought thousands of dollars. In 1898 the Fathers of the Precious Blood left Tennessee, but the Sisters remained at Loretto until 1904.[31]

ST. JOSEPH'S, TENNESSEE
(1888-1904)

In September, 1882, the mission church of St. Joseph, five miles from Loretto, was offered to the Fathers of the Precious Blood. Father Paul Rohjans attended it from Loretto. Not long after his arrival a quarry was opened near the old mission to obtain stone for a new church. The cornerstone was laid on March 19, 1883. Money that had been collected for the building, however, suddenly disappeared (it was either lost or stolen) and Father Paul traveled throughout the middle states to raise a second fund. He enjoyed the fruits of his hard labor for only a short time. In 1887, about a year after the church was completed, he died and was buried in the rear of the building.

In 1888, Sisters of the Precious Blood began to teach at St. Joseph's, Sister Donata Wessels again blazing the trail as she had done at Lawrenceburg, Nashville, and Loretto. Times were hard in Tennessee at this period, the people were poor, and the priests and Sisters lacked proper support. The latter finally abandoned the mission in 1904.[32]

In 1902, Mother Emma, in need of Sisters for missions nearer home, informed Bishop Byrne of Nashville of her intention to withdraw the Sisters of the Precious Blood permanently from the somewhat distant and poverty-stricken mission field in Tennessee. The bishop would not hear of such a move, as the following extract from his letter indicates:

> I am sure, dear Mother, that you as well as I have the good of these children at heart, and that in your charity you will not permit them to be deprived of the influence, good example and teaching of your Sisters. There are few places where you can do greater good or charity, and the sacrifice you make for these poor people and their children will undoubtedly bring a blessing to you and your Community. I trust therefore that you will not think of removing the Sisters, and as to myself I could not conscientiously consent to their going away. . . .
>
> I make this plea in the name of these helpless children on the Feast of the Sacred Heart.[33]

Mother Emma, in answer to his plea, allowed them to remain, but two years later (1904) all the missions in

Tennessee, except Lawrenceburg, were given up. Through the preponderant influence of Father Henry Ottke, who had been pastor of Sacred Heart in Lawrenceburg since 1901, the Sisters remained there as long as he did. In 1917, when he was taken to the Kneipp Sanitarium at Rome City to die, the Sisters too left this, their last stronghold in Tennessee. The Sisters of Mercy and the Dominicans from St. Cecilia's in Nashville subsequently took over most of these missions.

The hard spadework done by the early pioneers prepared the soil of the Tennessee mission field for a rich harvest which others were to garner. Few can appreciate the toil and hardship that went into the settling of this unpromising district. Father J. Leo Boehmer, who was pastor at Loretto for many years after the Fathers of the Precious Blood left, was one of the few to pay tribute (1905) to the pioneer missionaries:

> A great change has taken place here; everything began to boom as soon as the people obtained a market for lumber, which was worth nothing during the time the Community was staying here. . . . Nearly all the settlers, such as are worth thirty to forty thousand dollars today, would in those days come with a little basket or bucket daily to the convent to get something to eat. No doubt the Community faced hard times in those days. . . . The people will and must give credit for all to the Fathers and Sisters of the Most Precious Blood, for if they had not started here, it would certainly be a wilderness and a place of desolation. . . . The hardships they had to undergo the first years, no one will ever learn nor would they believe them if they were told.[34]

Besides the opening of this mission field in the South, another important project undertaken toward the end of Father Kunkler's provincialship was the building of a new shrine at Maria Steig, Thompson. This beautifully decorated shrine had exposed on the main altar a miraculous picture of the Mother of God, to whose power a number of striking cures were attributed. Crutches and other souvenirs left by pilgrims give evidence of these cures. Near the shrine a building was put up which was "intended to serve as a school for boarders and orphans," but it was never used for this purpose.[35]

In 1868 Father Kunkler went to Rome to visit the holy places and to attend the provincial chapter held that year. On his way back he stopped at Schellenberg, where he gave a retreat for the Sisters and often prayed at Father Brunner's tomb for strength and courage to carry on his arduous task as provincial. During his stay at the convent he was honored by a visit from Bishop Eugene Lachat.[36]

One of Father Kunkler's greatest joys was the consecration of Joseph Dwenger as the second bishop of Fort Wayne, on April 14, 1872. He had reason to be proud of his former protégé whom he had rescued from an untimely death. During the twenty years that Bishop Dwenger governed the Fort Wayne diocese, he not only paid off a heavy debt but he also organized a splendid school system which served as a model for other dioceses. In this connection Bishop Alerding wrote of him: "He became in truth the champion of Catholic education and was incessant in his urgings of his priests to gather the children of their own parishes into schools of their own."[37]

Bishop Dwenger presided at the provincial elections of the Fathers of the Precious Blood held in 1874. General sentiment favored the re-election of Father Andrew Kunkler as provincial. But Father Kunkler, feeling that he was not equal to a third term, declined the honor. When some insisted despite his refusal, Bishop Dwenger prevailed upon the voters to elect another candidate. Reverend Bernard Austermann was thereupon named the successor of him whose "name meant to all love of God and of fellow-men,"[38] and of whom Bishop Rademacher, at the time ordinary of Nashville, Tennessee, once remarked: "Father Kunkler is the most wholesouled priest I have ever met."[39]

Chapter VIII

A TREASURY OF HOLY RELICS

VENERATION of relics, a natural outgrowth of devotion to the saints, is as old as the Church itself. Holy Mother Church has always held in high honor the remains of her children who by their sanctity have given outward expression to her holiness, an unfailing mark of the one, Catholic, apostolic Church founded by Christ. The bodies of the saints, their clothes, the possessions they familiarly handled or cherished, are so many precious keepsakes which the Church respectfully and solemnly exposes on her altars as objects of veneration. These relics serve to remind the faithful that to each of them also St. Paul's injunction applies, "For this is the will of God, your sanctification" (I Thess. IV, 3), and to encourage them to aspire to holiness by walking in the footsteps of those whose lives were "one grand longing to love God more."

Mother Brunner was an ardent devotee of holy relics throughout her life. Before her death she asked that a relic of St. Aloysius, a special patron of hers, be placed in her coffin. Years later this same relic was to be a mark of identification of her own precious remains.[1]

Father Brunner, as a devoted son of the Church and of his own mother, was no less zealous in honoring the relics of saints. One of his principal hobbies was to collect as many relics as possible. On his early missionary travels he was an ardent collector, carrying from Rome major relics of saints and distributing them among his benefactors. On his first voyage to America he brought along the body of the holy martyr, St. Concordia. To the influence of this saint he at least partly ascribed the ship's well-nigh miraculous escapes from peril.

Other major relics that he was instrumental in bringing over from Europe were the bodies of St. Innocent, St. Cruser, and St. Victoria, and the heads of St. Candidus and St. Rogatus. Besides these there were particles of bones of St. Fidelis, St. Fridolin, St. Philomena, St. Ursus, St. Victor, and others.[2] To the inexpressible delight of this tireless collector, Sister Lucy Joos and Sister Johanna Gruenfelder brought over in 1845 a case containing a small relic of each saint commemorated in the liturgy throughout the ecclesiastical year.[3] All of these relics were distributed among the various houses, and with one exception — the relic of St. Candidus, which was carried off from the Himmelgarten convent by Father Joseph Albrecht and his faction in 1866[4] — are still in the possession of the community.

Had Father Brunner's years been prolonged to fourscore, he would have been overjoyed at the sight of the rich treasury of holy relics which came into the possession of the community in 1875, the gift of Father J. M. Gartner, a Missionary of the Sacred Heart in the Milwaukee diocese.

In December, 1872, Father Gartner had been sent to Rome by Bishop John Martin Henni of Milwaukee in the interests of the diocese. Italy, still suffering from the ravages of civil war, was infested with notorious *banditti* who plundered churches and sold their sacred vessels and ornaments to the highest bidder. Every effort was made by fervent Catholics to save from desecration the holy relics which for centuries had been venerated in churches and monasteries; some were taken along by priests and religious when they were expelled from their churches or convents, while a large number were placed under apostolic custody until they could be safely redistributed among the churches.[5]

It was an opportune time for Father Gartner to acquire a collection of precious relics for the impoverished churches in America, which possessed few shrines of grace to satisfy the instinctive longing of the pilgrim heart. Through a personal friend, His Eminence Cardinal Patrizi, the Prefect of the Apostolic Custody, Father Gartner succeeded in procuring an admirable selection of sacred relics. At the advice and on the recommendation of Father Anderledy, the Assistant General of the Society of Jesus, he obtained several valuable additions in Venice.[6]

Returning to America, Father Gartner stopped in New York and exposed his entire collection for veneration by the faithful in the Church of the Holy Redeemer. His first plan was to distribute the relics among several churches and monasteries, but Cardinal McCloskey of New York advised otherwise: "It were a pity," he objected, "to divide such a treasury of relics; the church that would possess them would certainly become a great pilgrimage church."[7]

Father Gartner exposed his collection also in Baltimore, Cincinnati, and several other cities. In each place he noted the same sincere admiration and glowing enthusiasm in the crowds of pilgrims attracted to the exposition. He therefore decided, in accordance with the suggestion of Cardinal McCloskey, to seek out the place best suited to the safe custody and proper veneration of his treasure. But first he informed Pope Pius IX of the plan, asked his blessing upon it, and begged His Holiness for several more relics of Our Lord to complete the collection. Through the influence of Bishop Dwenger of Fort Wayne, who was in Rome at the time, he obtained his request.[8]

The choice of a place that would meet every requirement for a pilgrimage church was his next consideration. After consulting several eminent authorities and carefully weighing all the circumstances, he finally selected the convent chapel of the Sisters of the Precious Blood at Maria Stein, Ohio, as the place best adapted for enshrining the holy relics. The location of the chapel in a veritable "holy land," where for miles around the spires of Catholic churches at close intervals give evidence of an almost entirely Catholic neighborhood; its seclusion in the quiet countryside where the very atmosphere breathes devotion and incites to prayer; its remoteness from the centers of population, which makes pilgrimages in the true sense possible; and the perpetual adoration of the Sisters — these were the chief considerations that determined his final choice.[9]

Accordingly, about a fortnight after Easter in 1875, Father Gartner arrived at Maria Stein with his precious collection of relics. He placed them for veneration in the Sisters' chapel on Friday, April 30. After recounting how he had acquired them and pointing out the principal relics in the collection, he reminded the Sisters of their unique privilege in being appointed custodians of so sacred a treasure — a privilege that had been withheld from many others who had ardently desired it. The Sisters, on their part, actuated by a traditional love for relics of the saints, accepted the sacred trust with unfeigned joy and with a deep sense of responsibility. They were determined to do all in their power to prove themselves worthy of their high privilege.[10]

For good reasons no publicity was given to the exposition of the relics, either in the county newspaper or from the neighboring pulpits. Nevertheless the news spread rapidly, and soon a number of curious neighbors were asking to see the collection. On the following Sunday, May 2, a solemn procession was planned to inspire the people with proper reverence for the holy treasure. The Sisters and the parishioners of St. John's assembled at the church whence, chanting hymns and prayers, they wended their way to the convent chapel, a distance of half a mile. Solemn high Mass followed. In his sermon, Father Gartner explained the relics to the large gathering of people and expressed the desire that a pilgrimage church be erected near the Sisters' chapel, where the sacred mementoes could be properly enshrined and duly venerated. In the afternoon of the same day Vespers were chanted and another sermon was preached, after which the people were permitted to kiss the relic of the true cross. Children came the next day from the schools nearby to see the relics and to kiss the particle of the cross; and each child received a picture as a souvenir of this memorable occasion.[11]

On May 4, Father Gartner returned to Milwaukee. During the next several months he busied himself with drawing up plans for a relic chapel which would be worthy of the treasure it was to shelter. The following November he laid these plans before Father Bernard Austermann, the provincial of the Congregation, and before representatives of St. John's parish. For some time they could come to no agreement on the site for the proposed building. The parishioners of St. John's desired to have the relics in the parish church or in a chapel which they would erect near by. But Father Gartner would not forego his cherished plan of entrusting the relics to the direct supervision of the Sisters, who, he was convinced, would take every precaution that none of them would be given away or stolen and would exercise the greatest care in preserving and venerating them.[12]

Finally an agreement was reached: the Sisters were to provide a suitable place for the relics and be charged with their safekeeping; the parishioners would defray the expenses of arranging and furnishing the chapel on condition that none of the relics be given away or taken to any other place.

Father Gartner's dream of having a separate building erected for the relics was not realized at this time. Instead, a room adjoining the convent chapel was remodeled according to his plan and directions by Caspar Stelzer, assisted by Brother Anthony and Brother Ludwig. They converted the old "church room" into a beautiful shrine, and made the altars and the cabinets for the relics. The Sisters did the finishing on the woodwork. Father Gartner himself lined the cabinets with red silk fringed with gold and arranged the reliquaries in their proper places.[13]

Before the work on the relic chapel was completed Father Gartner found it expedient to leave Maria Stein, not so much on account of his failing health as because of misunderstandings that had arisen with Archbishop Purcell, who had desired Father Gartner to leave his treasury of relics in Cincinnati. Though Father Gartner had afterward received the archbishop's written approbation for enshrining the relics at Maria Stein, he exceeded all the expectations of the prelate in carrying out his scheme. The archbishop, taking exception to Father Gartner's large money collections and to his plan of making Maria Stein a place of pilgrimage, openly expressed his displeasure. To avoid further complications, Father Gartner then decided to leave.[14] "I go," he said, "not because I must, but out of consideration for the Sisters, who otherwise may have to suffer on my account; yet I have a perfect right to remain here — a right granted me from Rome."[15] Though loath to leave the place where he had hoped to spend his last years close to his precious relics, he returned to La Crosse, Wisconsin, on July 13.

By the end of October, the new relic chapel was completed, and plans were made for its solemn dedication. On November 8, the octave of All Saints' Day, Father Bernard Austermann dedicated the shrine to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. After the ceremony of dedication, a low Mass was offered on the altar of the new relic chapel, while a solemn high Mass was celebrated in the main chapel. Father Bigot, of Berlin, Ohio, preached a sermon befitting the occasion. The absence of Father Gartner, who, before all, should have been present that day, was the one note of sorrow in an otherwise jubilant celebration.[16]

But Father Gartner never again returned to Maria Stein. As his tubercular condition grew rapidly worse he soon realized that his days were numbered. Although confined to his bed and weakened by the least exertion, he was not idle; he busied himself with preparing for publication a manuscript on the relics. On January 4, 1877, he wrote his last letter to Maria Stein. This letter reveals his calm resignation in the face of death and his firm conviction that only after his death would veneration of the holy relics become more widespread. "My heart, my love," he wrote in closing, "remains with the work at Maria Stein. My sincerest, heartfelt greetings to all the loved ones. I remember you daily and constantly in prayer. *Vale.*"[17] Just two months later, on March 4, 1877, Father Gartner went to his reward.

During the Lenten season of that year special devotions were inaugurated in which the relic commemorated in the liturgy on each Friday of Lent was honored — a practice that was kept up without interruption for the next twenty years. Morning services consisted of a high Mass and sermon, followed by the veneration of the relic. Those present were granted the privilege of kissing it as it was extended to them at the communion rail. Throughout the day the relic was exposed amid lighted candles for veneration by the faithful.[18]

The next ten years brought more and more pilgrims to visit this hallowed shrine of grace as its fame became more and more widespread. Meanwhile, the Sisters were making plans to build a new convent, in which were included contracts for an adoration chapel and a relic chapel. In the summer of 1887, when their decision became public, the question of who were the rightful custodians of the relics was again raised and hotly debated. The people of St. John's parish claimed the right of custody on the ground that they had borne the brunt of expenses in fitting out the first relic chapel; the Sisters claimed the right in virtue of the sacred trust that had been confided to them by Father Gartner. To settle the dispute, Father Thomas Eisenring, pastor of St. John's, wrote to Father Bernard Austermann, who had been chaplain at Maria Stein at the time of the deposition of the relics. Father Austermann answered that the Sisters had first claim to the relics for the following reasons:

> 1. The holy relics were given to Reverend Father Gartner in Rome on condition that they remain as a single collection, that they be placed in safe custody, and that the aim of their general veneration be realized.
>
> 2. The good order, cleanliness, and artistic decorations which have hitherto been maintained in the relic chapel in the convent and which are calculated to inspire the pilgrim or pious visitor with devotion, will be lacking in the parish church.
>
> 3. The custom of having many Holy Masses said in the relic chapel to obtain help in both corporal and spiritual necessities will be for the most part abrogated in the parish church.

> 4. Finally, in order that the above-mentioned conditions be fulfilled, Father Gartner expressly gave over the custody of the holy relics to the community of the Precious Blood on July 8, 1876.[19]

As a result of this decisive stand taken by Father Austermann, the controversy seems to have died down temporarily, but two years later when actual building operations on the chapel began, it flared up once more. Father Austermann was again called upon to settle the matter. He reiterated his conviction that the relics were to remain as a single collection with the Sisters at Maria Stein. Recalling the agreement between St. John's representatives and the Sisters, which had been made in the presence of Father Gartner, he wrote to the provincial, Father Henry Drees:

> The parishioners of St. John's were unanimous in their decision that the holy relics should remain there [Maria Stein]. In a few days they collected almost $1,300 for furnishing the small chapel. He himself [Father Gartner], as he told me, had contributed between $1,000 and $1,100 of his own inheritance to it.[20]

This testimony of Father Austermann brought the issue to a close and work on the chapel proceeded rapidly in the spring of 1890. On June 11 of that year, Most Reverend William Henry Elder, Archbishop of Cincinnati, laid the cornerstone of the new relic chapel and on November 22, 1892, he dedicated the completed chapel to the Sacred Heart.

The ceremony of dedication and especially the translation of the holy relics to the new shrine was solemn and impressive. After the dedication the archbishop spoke a few words to impress upon the minds of his hearers the deep significance and the great sacredness of the act in which they were about to participate. In the name of holy Mother Church, he called upon the saints to leave their thrones in heaven, as it were, and to erect in the shrine where their remains would be honored, a throne

MAIN ALTAR OF THE RELIC CHAPEL, MARIA STEIN, OHIO

of grace to which the people could bring their prayers. He humbly acknowledged himself unworthy of the privilege that was his, of bearing a particle of the true cross.

After the sermon the ceremony proper began with the formation of a procession led by a hundred girls clad in white. These were followed by members of the various societies and sodalities of St. John's parish. Four priests supported a bier covered with red velvet and decorated with gold studdings, on which rested several major relics; four more carried the body of St. Victoria encased in glass. Then came thirty priests bearing ostensoria containing smaller relics, while Archbishop Elder, holding aloft the precious relic of the true cross, brought up the rear of the triumphal procession. Appropriate banners honoring Our Lord and particular groups of saints — Apostles, doctors, martyrs, virgins, holy innocents — were carried in their proper places. Voices were raised in prayer and supplication as the solemn procession advanced through the doors of the new chapel, which was beautifully decorated for the occasion, and the relics were deposited in their proper places.

The inspiring spectacle profoundly moved all who were present. It made such a lasting impression upon Archbishop Elder that he is said to have spoken of it repeatedly thereafter.[21]

The relic chapel is much the same today as it was then. On entering from the outside, the visitor reads the awe-inspiring words carved in the stone lintel of the door: "Enter devoutly, O Pilgrim, for there is no holier place in the New World than this." Through a small vestibule he passes into the chapel proper, which, though not large, is a gem of ecclesiastical art. There he is almost immediately confronted with the three wood-carved altars, richly adorned with glass cases containing gleaming medallions and ostensoria placed against a background of dark velvet. Here are enshrined the rare treasures which have made the relic chapel at Maria Stein famous as a pilgrimage church.[22]

Year after year come hundreds of pilgrims to this shrine of grace to present their petitions, confident that by venerating the sacred remains of those saints who help to form the grand army of the Church Triumphant, they will experience a special efficacy in their prayers, re-enforced as these are by the intercessory power of so many of God's closest friends. To the reader also the invitation is extended:

> May the Spirit of Love which led Jesus Christ into the solitude of the desert to pray, which led the Saints away from the worldly world and which animates so many thousands to spend their whole life in prayer, may this same Holy Spirit direct you and accompany you to this Holy Shrine and reveal to you the true values of spiritualities and temporalities; and may time usher you into the company of the blessed Saints of God whose relics are enshrined at Maria Stein, Ohio.[23]

Chapter IX

FATHER HENRY HELPS SOLVE IMPORTANT PROBLEMS

FATHER BERNARD AUSTERMANN, who had so staunchly defended the right of the Sisters to the custody of the sacred treasury of relics at Maria Stein, was succeeded in his office of American provincial by Father Henry Drees, "a true Israelite in whom Adam seems not to have sinned."[1] More familiarly and affectionately known as Father Henry, he was to be for almost thirty years (1880-1909) the wise counselor, the spiritual director, and the loving father of the Sisters of the Precious Blood.

Born in Garrel, Oldenburg, North Germany, in 1830, young Henry Drees emigrated with his family to America and settled in Minster, Ohio. In 1858, although twenty-eight years of age, he entered the seminary of the Society of the Precious Blood, then located at Maria Stein, to prepare for the priesthood. Less than four years later he was ordained. This curtailment of his studies, necessitated by a demand for German-speaking priests, whetted his desire for greater learning as befitted a priest of the Most High. Naturally gifted, he lost no opportunity to apply himself with ardor to both sacred and secular studies, with the result that he was able to match wits with the best of his confreres who had had the advantage of a long and systematic training.

After several years spent in parish and missionary work, to which he devoted himself zealously and unstintingly, he was appointed (1866) rector of St. Charles Seminary, a position he held for fourteen years. But even greater confidence was placed in his ability to govern wisely and well when he was elected provincial of the American Congregation in 1880. It was in this capacity that he became closely associated with the Sisters, first as their superior and later as their spiritual director.[2]

Important problems were at this time confronting the Sisters' community, which needed all the ripe experience, the disinterested zeal, and the sane judgment of a Father Henry. One might say that the future destiny of the community was decided during the decade 1880-1890 and that the favorable decisions were due in no small measure to the untiring efforts of this saintly priest.

In 1878, a circular letter had been sent out from Rome by Mother Karolina Signoretti, the Superior General of the Sisters Adorers of the Most Precious Blood, a Congregation founded in 1834 by Venerable Maria de Mattias under the inspiration and guidance of Gaspar del Bufalo. The letter was directed to the various communities of the Sisters of the Precious Blood in Europe and America, inviting them to unite with the Roman Congregation and to accept its Rule, which was then in process of revision. The principal changes in the Rule, as required by the Holy See, regarded the profession of simple vows, which was to become obligatory on all novices after completing the novitiate; the duration of the term of office of Mother Superior, which was to be limited to twelve years; and the presiding prelate at the general chapter, who was to be appointed by the ordinary.

The writer of the letter, taking for granted that the community of the Precious Blood at Maria Stein was but a branch house of the Roman Congregation, asked the Sisters to declare in writing or through a personal representative at the forthcoming general chapter in Rome their formal submission to the new Rule and to send a history of the community, an account of its present status, and a financial report.[3]

Here was indeed an important affair which required deliberation, counsel, and above all, prayer. The advice of Bishop Dwenger of Fort Wayne, who was in a better position than anyone else to know conditions both at home and abroad, was asked. He strongly and decisively advised against such a union.

Accordingly a letter was sent to Rome in which the reasons for not accepting the proposal to unite were clearly set forth.[4]

These reasons were not sufficient, however, to satisfy the Roman Sisters. Another letter, dated March 14, 1880, was addressed directly to Mother Kunigunda at Maria Stein. The Roman Sisters were determined; all the difficulties represented to them were easily swept aside. Mother Karolina wrote in part:

> From all this you can see, beloved fellow-Sister, that if the American Sisters be united with Rome they lose nothing and gain everything. If you reject the Rule approved by the Holy See you will not be recognized by Rome; then to whom will you turn for protection in case of a faction, or a persecution, or a rebellion? If you are not united with Rome, i e., with the superior general, then you depend solely upon the bishops and are subject to their whims. You form then merely a pious union in one or more dioceses, but never a religious institute, recognized as such by the Holy See. This union, therefore, will be neither a sacrifice nor a disadvantage for you, but a privilege.
>
> I earnestly beg you, therefore, to come to a decision as soon as possible, since in September of this year the general chapter must be held in Rome and the Holy Father wishes to know how many and which Sisters have the right to be present.[5]

The affair was far from settled. The following November another circular letter came which stated that in accordance with the wishes of the Holy See all the communities of Sisters of the Precious Blood were to be divided into the following several provinces:

1. The Roman province with the provincial house in Via St. Giovanni in Laterano.

2. The province of South Italy with the motherhouse in Acuto in the diocese of Anagni.

3. The German-Austrian province with the motherhouse in Bosnia, since other houses were closed owing to persecution.

4. Two American provinces: one with the provincial house at Maria Stein, and including all the houses and Sisters that at present depend upon the vicaress resident at the aforesaid place; the other with the provincial house at Ruma, and including all the Sisters that are subject to the other vicaress, Sister Clementine Ferr (Superior of Sisters of the Precious Blood of Ruma, Illinois).

The letter concludes:

> These are, beloved daughter, the assignments made by the Holy See, which I recommend all to accept with obedient submission. I have the greatest confidence in the zeal of our Sisters, that they will bring that sacrifice for the welfare of the Institute of which they have hitherto given such striking evidence. The honor of the Precious Blood of the Divine Lamb, the salvation of souls, and the good of our community are the aims of our calling.
>
> The grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ be always with you, and the Lord grant to all His blessing.[6]

A special letter addressed to Mother Kunigunda and her Sisters was enclosed with the circular:

> Reverend Mother and Beloved Daughters in Jesus Christ:
>
> In one of your letters, which I answered with the greatest care, you speak of the difficulties you will encounter in accepting the revised Rule approved by the Holy See. I will not repeat here the answer I gave to each of your objections; you may do as you feel yourself impelled to do before God. Nevertheless, I must here remark that the Holy Roman Congregation wishes us to remain united, just as the Missionaries of the Precious Blood in America are united with those in Rome and in Europe, even though they differ in some points of rule. Since for this end the Holy See has prescribed that our Institute be divided into provinces, I thought it my duty to inform you that one province consists of those Sisters that depend upon you. Now I request that you at least reconsider this ordinance and co-operate with the same spirit, namely, the spirit of union and of love. Here we

> shall not touch upon the question of the Rule; we shall come back to that in due time. Because of your filial piety, your zeal, and your dependence on the Institute, I am assured of a favorable reception of my words and a willing compliance with the same.
>
> In all submission I sign myself your servant,
>
> KAROLINA SIGNORETTI,
> Superior General of the
> Sisters of the Precious Blood[7]

The affair dragged on indefinitely. Father Henry during his visit to Rome in 1883 laid the matter before the Prefect of the Sacred Congregation. Discussion followed, and the Cardinal Prefect, on hearing that the Sisters at Maria Stein preferred to remain independent from the Roman Congregation, exclaimed: "So be it."[8] But the issue was not closed as simply as that, as later developments proved.

Final approbation of the Rule of the Sisters Adorers of the Precious Blood in Rome was granted by the Holy See on December 13, 1887.[9] This seems to have been the occasion of reopening the whole question of the amalgamation of the various communities of that name. Archbishop Elder, in a letter to Mother Ludovica about this time, makes the following comments:

> This [that Father Henry remain spiritual director] is the more expedient just now on account of a recent letter from the Propaganda, which I have communicated to Fr. Drees. The Cardinal Prefect writes that the Holy Father wishes all the Sisters of the Precious Blood to be united in one body.
>
> I have answered him that I have no doubt the Sisters are disposed to give cheerful obedience to any command of the Holy Father, but that I think there is not much similarity between your Congregation and the others. I told him I would direct you to make a statement of your origin — ends — mode of life: so that the Holy Father might judge

> better. As far as I see at present, such a union is not at all advisable. It will be right for you to express clearly the wishes of your Sisters in that regard; and I will add what I think about it.
>
> And if the question is to be treated at Rome, Fr. Drees will be the best one to manage it for you. He already had some discussion about it when he was there. And his office of Provincial will give much more weight to his representations than would be attached to the opinion of any other of the Fathers.[10]

A few days later Archbishop Elder addressed a letter of similar tenor to Mother Kunigunda.[11] Following the advice of the archbishop, the Sisters wrote a letter to the Holy Father in which they set forth clearly and succinctly their reasons for remaining independent of the Roman Sisters. Priority of foundation; their large membership; their aims and mode of life; the attitude of the American prelates, especially Archbishop Elder and Bishop Dwenger, who had expressed their opposition to the union; the statement and opinion of the Prefect of the Sacred Congregation made to Father Henry while he was in Rome in 1883; the distance and the difference in language and customs; the universal dissent of the Sisters themselves — all these were represented to Pope Leo XIII as compelling reasons for remaining independent from the Roman Congregation.[12] Since there are no further communications on the matter, we conclude that the controversy was at length at an end.

As Father Henry was the chief advocate of the Sisters in their efforts to remain independent of the Roman Congregation, so he was their guiding spirit in every exigency that affected them directly or indirectly. He was especially concerned about their spiritual welfare, as is shown both in personal letters and in general ordinances that were sent out from time to time.[13] The superioresses, who as his representatives bore the brunt of the burden of governing the community, were favored with special admonitions and directions, the fruit of his own broad experience and keen observation of human nature.[14]

In 1883, Father Henry went to Rome to present his report as provincial of the American Congregation. A letter which he wrote en route to New York reveals the beautiful relationship that existed between him and the Sisters:

> Now I am about ready to start! Tomorrow evening from here and Saturday from New York.
>
> Once more I send you my greetings and my blessing in the Lord! I recommend you again to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to the maternal Heart of Mary. The good old spiritual father, Father Andrew, will then be your father in my place.
>
> Having recommended you to God, I now say farewell! Fulfill your sacred duties with joyous hearts! Love one another as sisters, and should Divine Providence see fit not to lead me back to you again be these my parting words: My little Sisters, love! Love God above all things with your whole hearts. Often exclaim: "O my God, that I may love Thee; O my Jesus, that I may never more offend Thee!" Love one another in the Precious Blood of Jesus! May no harsh, no bitter, no offensive word mar this mutual love.
>
> Love Mary — yes, Mary, the loving, gracious Queen of Heaven!
>
> Praised be Jesus Christ! Say — "For ever and ever. Amen!"
>
> Pray for Father Henry.[15]

After a several months' sojourn in Europe Father Henry returned in August, bringing with him eleven candidates and several children. Among the latter were Liberat Schupp and his sister Regina, who were for a time placed under the care of the Sisters at Glandorf. Later both entered the Congregation, the lad to become Father Liberat Schupp, who years later returned to Glandorf as pastor; the girl to become Sister Oliva, who died early of consumption.

One of the first important projects that Father Henry undertook on his return to the States was the transfer of the normal school from Maria Stein to Greenwood. A lifelong student himself, Father Henry was deeply interested in the educational activities of the Sisters and was especially concerned about the proper training of teachers to fit them for their high office. The normal school, which had been functioning successfully since 1862, first under the able direction of Sister Adelaide Schmerge and later under that of Sister Hedwig Flamm, was no longer adequate to meet the needs of the growing number of students who were preparing to teach in the parish schools the Sisters had been asked to take over.[16] Since more spacious and congenial quarters could be provided in the Greenwood convent, the student body was transferred thither in the fall of 1883.

Sister Christina Grimmer, one of the pioneer Sisters of whom mention has already been made, was called from Minster, where for over twenty years she had been in charge of the boarding school, to assume the direction of the normal at Greenwood and to become mistress of the novices and postulants gathered there for study. For nine years (1883-1892) the normal school prospered in its beautiful surroundings, first under the direction of Sister Christina and later of Sister Cecilia Lang, who succeeded her in 1886. Some of the students were ambitious enough to write and illustrate a school paper, *The Back Woods,* several copies of which have been preserved. From its neatly written columns one can glean some interesting facts about the studies, the recreations, and the daily routine of the students of those early days. Read, for example, their manner of spending Christmas Day in the year 1890. After setting forth the happiness of attending midnight Mass and receiving Holy Communion, the news writer continues:

> Lunch consisted of cake and beer, the liquor having been presented by kind Mrs. Enneking. We then sang and talked before the crib until noon. This crib is much nicer than ever before, and was quite a surprise on Christmas Eve. Our dinner was good, consisting in a fine big turkey and many good things. The time after dinner was spent in praying one hour and having instructions one hour. We visited the

> graveyard at intervals, trying very hard to bring release to our dear friends in that pool of fire called purgatory.[17]

Meanwhile, Father Henry, whose interest in the community never flagged, was informed by Archbishop Elder that a complete change in the status of the Congregation of the Precious Blood was to be effected in compliance with a decree sent out from Rome in 1878. This degree called for a separation of male from female communities in all religious Congregations consisting of priests, Brothers, and Sisters with common property.[18]

To insure a just division of all the property owned by the Congregation of the Precious Blood, a conference was held at Carthagena with the purpose of electing a committee to represent the priests and Brothers. Fathers Henry Drees, Godfrey Schlachter, Francis Nigsch, and Bernard Dickman were chosen to serve on this committee. Archbishop Elder also named a committee of priests — all Precious Blood Fathers, as expressly requested by the Sisters — to represent the claims of the Sisters' community. Those appointed were Fathers Andrew Kunkler, Bernard Austermann, and Thomas Eisenring.[19]

On May 5, 1887, the two committees met to deed over to the Sisters by legal act such tracts of land as had been agreed upon previously.[20] All the buildings on said tracts were included in the transfer, and any debts that still rested on the property were to be paid by the Fathers.[21]

To empower the Sisters to possess and administer in their own right the property deeded over to them, their community was legally incorporated as an independent organization under the title of "Female Society of the Precious Blood." The act of incorporation took place the next day (May 6) and the articles were signed by the following Sisters acting as incorporators: Mother Kunigunda Wehrle, Sisters Ludovica Scharf, Appia Kleinuebing, Nathalia Josberger, and Cecilia Lang. The records and articles of incorporation were then registered in Columbus, Ohio, by Daniel J. Ryan, Secretary of State, on May 11, 1887, and were also filed in the counties where the community owned property.[22]

Legal formalities over, the Sisters were free to turn their minds to other matters that called for immediate attention. That all had been carried out equitably and to the complete satisfaction of both parties is shown by a statement of Archbishop Elder in a letter sent to the Sisters' community the following month: "The result [of the division] has proved the holy spirit of justice and charity which animates both communities. For without much difficulty they agreed unanimously on a division which has proved entirely satisfactory to both."[23]

The one man who was largely responsible for the admirable way in which all business transactions were carried out between the two communities in the act of separation, was Father Henry. He saw with penetrating vision; he acted with disinterested zeal, bent only on doing the will of God; he loved with the glowing ardor of a saint, and therefore could cement the bonds of love and good will which insured contentment, harmony, and peace where dissatisfaction, discord, and contention might have been expected according to human calculations.

Though the Sisters were now no longer subject to the provincial of the Congregation of the Precious Blood as their immediate superior, Archbishop Elder saw fit to appoint a priest-director for them to represent him on the board of the community and likewise to act as adviser in all spiritual and temporal matters that were not of sufficient importance to refer to the ordinary. It is not surprising that his choice fell upon Father Henry, for the archbishop had come to place great confidence in the virtue, learning, and good judgment of this man of God, as is shown repeatedly in previous letters, as well as in the following, which announces the appointment:

> I have appointed Very Rev. Fr. Drees, C. PP. S., to act as the Director of your Community of the Precious Blood. The great and long services which he has rendered to your Congregation — and the esteem in which you all hold him

> — assure me that the appointment will be productive of much good, and be very acceptable.[24]

Father Henry himself had made a promise to the Sisters at the time of separation: "We will do our utmost to care for you."[25] He always lived up to that promise. After Father Francis Nigsch, known for his "genial humor and wise experience," had served for nine years (1890-1899) in the capacity of official director of the Sisters, Father Henry was to come back to them as spiritual father and remain with them until death.

PART THREE

ORGANIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT

(1887-1936)

Chapter I

UNDER A NEW REGIME

EVEN before the final act of separation from the Fathers and Brothers of the Precious Blood was consummated and the Sisters were incorporated as a self-subsisting organization, steps had been taken to revise the Rule to meet the new conditions and to add a Constitution establishing a form of self-government. This had not been necessary as long as the Sisters were directed by the priests, and Father Brunner for one was entirely opposed to what he humorously called "an aristocratic regime of women officers." But times and conditions had changed since pioneer days, when community life was lived as simply as in a well-ordered family.

As early as the summer of 1886 Archbishop Elder, whose fatherly concern for the community is attested by numerous letters, asked for a copy of the book of Rules then followed by the Sisters of the Precious Blood and requested Father J. C. Albrinck to examine them. The archbishop then appointed a committee of Fathers of the Precious Blood, with Father Henry Drees acting as chairman, to draw up a form of Constitution for the Sisters adapted to conditions as they would exist after the separation. Similarly, he invited Mother Kunigunda and her council to commit to writing such articles as from their viewpoint seemed important in the government of their community.[1]

In March, 1887, the Sisters sent to Archbishop Elder a copy of the Rules and Constitutions they themselves had drawn up. The prelate expressed his pleasure in the work of the Sisters; he was awaiting the copy prepared by the Fathers so that the drafts could be examined and compared. He himself personally read all the articles submitted, and not satisfied with this, referred them to experienced religious for their opinions.[2]

On March 14, Sister Ludovica and Sister Cecilia arrived in Cincinnati to confer with the archbishop about the needs and welfare of the Congregation. On this occasion he suggested a method of electing a chapter, which he advised be done as soon as possible so that proper officials might be chosen the following summer to govern the Congregation.

After a just division of the property had been made and the Sisters duly incorporated, Archbishop Elder addressed a long letter to all the Sisters of the Congregation, which he had written "in little pieces while traveling around" and which he "sat up till midnight" to finish.[3] This letter reveals so well the fatherly kindness of the great-hearted prelate and attests so strongly the deep concern he had for the welfare of the Sisters of the Precious Blood, that it deserves to be given here at length.

> William Henry Elder
>
> By the grace of God and the favor of the Apostolic See
> Archbishop of Cincinnati
>
> To the Sisters of the Congregation of the Precious Blood of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati — health and blessing
>
> Dearly beloved Sisters and Children in Christ:
>
> On the occasion of our official visit to the tombs of the Apostles, in the winter of A. D. 1885-86, the Sovereign Pontiff, through the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, gave us some particular instructions for the welfare of your Congregation.
>
> Your Community, so blessed of God, is one of the fruits of the holy seeds sown by the labors and watered by the prayers and the virtues of the Venerable Gaspar of Bufalo, founder of the Congregation of Fathers bearing the same title with you.
>
> The holy Priest, Francis de Sales Brunner, was one of those who walked most closely in the footsteps of their

saintly Founder, and was most filled with his holy spirit. He was led by the Holy Ghost to form your Congregation. He guided it during his life — and impressed it with his spirit, to animate and direct it after his death.

As a good Father of a family forms his children like to himself, not so much by written rules as by the living rule of his own example and daily teaching, so did the Venerable Father Brunner form the first Sisters of your Congregation to lead lives as much as possible like his own, through means of his oral instructions and counsels. To preserve in you the same method of life and the same spirit after his death, he entrusted your spiritual care to the Reverend Fathers of the Congregation of the Precious Blood, leaving also a written code of very precious admonitions and exhortations.

Those Reverend Fathers have discharged very faithfully the duty committed to them. They have continued to lead you in the same ways of piety, prayer, and self-denial, which they themselves follow, in imitation of the Venerable Gaspar of Bufalo.

You have grown now to be a large Community, spread over a wide space of country, in many convents, doing great service to God, particularly in the holy work of pleading day and night before the Blessed Sacrament of Love, and exercising charity in the Catholic education of children.

Being no longer living under one roof, but widely separated, and some not seeing others for months or longer, it becomes difficult or impossible to keep one method of life, and infuse one spirit into all without having written Rules and Constitutions. The Rules, to lay down the method of life — the religious exercises and works of the Sisters; and the Constitutions, to establish a form of government — method of appointing superiors and other officers, and their powers and duties.

By the established laws of the Church, such a Community must be placed under the direction of the Bishop of the Diocese. And the Cardinal Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars instructed us, as we have intimated in the beginning, that we should take measures as early as practicable to have your Congregation separated, both in government and in property, from the Congregation of the Fathers of the Precious Blood, and to see that it should be established with its own superiors and its own Rules and Constitutions.

The Very Reverend Father Drees, Provincial of the Fathers of the Precious Blood, as soon as he was informed of this instruction, entered immediately and cheerfully into the wise spirit of the Holy See. He, in concert with your Reverend Mother Cunegunda [*sic*] and her Council and ourselves, arranged to form a joint commission of representatives of the two Congregations to agree on a just division of the property, which had hitherto been held all in the name of the Fathers for the common use of the Fathers and Sisters. With the advice of the Reverend Mother, we appointed, as representatives of the Sisters, three Fathers belonging to the Congregation, and chosen by the Sisters. The Sisters themselves believed that it was best to choose Fathers of the Congregation for their representatives because, on the one hand, the Sisters had entire confidence in their disinterested spirit; and on the other hand, no other persons could know as well as those Fathers did, the condition and the value of the various properties. The Father Provincial appointed three others to represent the Fathers, and the result has proved the holy spirit of justice and charity which animates both Communities. For without much difficulty they agreed unanimously on a division which has proved entirely satisfactory to both.

After this we directed that a code of Constitutions should be drawn up, in which should be clearly laid down a form of government and method of choosing superiors; and a code of Rules, which should be as nearly as possible conformable to the exercises and usages which have been commonly observed among you. These have been prepared and we have submitted them to the conscientious consideration of some wise and holy priests well acquainted with the religious life, that they may see whether any changes may be needed, either to make them more perfectly conformable to the practice of the Church, or more efficacious for your spiritual and temporal welfare.

But some time may yet elapse before we can conclude our judgment on the Constitutions and Rules. And we have judged it prudent and even necessary to proceed at once to establish a government by the choice of a Chapter which shall elect a Mother Coadjutrix and the other officers for the administration of the Community.

We have of our own authority, in consultation with Reverend Mother Cunegunda, her Council, and also with Very Reverend Father Drees, appointed a method of election for this occasion. And the Chapter and the officers now chosen shall continue in the exercise of their duties for the length of time which shall be fixed in the Constitutions. The Chapter shall consist of twenty-one Sisters who shall be chosen by the votes of the Sisters. This Chapter shall assemble at the time and place to be appointed by the Reverend Mother and her Council, and shall choose by a majority of the whole a Mother Coadjutrix; and eleven votes shall be necessary for the majority and the votes will be given by secret ballot.

Reverend Mother Cunegunda shall continue to hold the title and rank of Mother Superior during her life. The Mother Coadjutrix shall relieve her of the burden of administration, so far as we may determine in consultation with the Council.

When the Mother Coadjutrix shall have been chosen, she will nominate her First Assistant, and the Chapter shall without discussion vote to accept or reject the one who is nominated. Eleven votes shall be needed for accepting her. This voting shall be by secret ballot — white and black beans. If she is rejected, the Coadjutrix will name another to be voted for likewise, and continue until one is accepted. Then she shall proceed to name the other officers in like manner.

The Mistress of Novices shall be appointed by the Mother Coadjutrix without any voting. She must, however, consult the other Sisters of her Council and hear what they have to say about her qualifications. She may be changed, too, in the same manner. The officers thus chosen, with the Mistress of Novices added to them, shall form the Council.

The method of electing the twenty-one Sisters who shall form the Chapter will be explained to you by the Sister Secretary according to our directions.

Those Sisters shall be entitled to vote for the Chapter who shall have made the Oath of Fidelity one year or more before the first of July, 1887. Any Sister may be elected a member of the Chapter who shall have made the Oath of Fidelity five years before the first of July, 1887 (and have also made the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience).

Until the Constitutions shall have been approved and put into operation, the powers and the duties of the several Superiors and officers of the Council and of the Chapter shall be subject to our determination according to the authority which we hold as Archbishop of the Diocese, and under the direction of the Sovereign Pontiff.

And now, dear Sisters, we most affectionately invoke on each and all of you the blessing of Almighty God, the infinite merits of the Most Precious Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and we commend you to the intercession of His ever blessed Mother and her Spouse St. Joseph, of His Holy Apostles, and of the Venerable Servant of God, the Holy Gaspar of Bufalo, and of all the holy men and women who following his rule are now saints in heaven.

And we beg your prayers for ourself and for all the souls entrusted to our care.

Your faithful servant and Father in Christ,

William Henry Elder
Archbishop of Cincinnati

Cincinnati
Feast of St. Basil, June 14, 1887[4]

The election of a chapter having taken place on July 18, the newly elected members assembled in the motherhouse on July 27. After a high Mass offered by Father Thomas Eisenring, the chapter met for the election of officers. Mother Kunigunda, who had been the superioress of the Congregation for almost thirty years, desired that someone else be chosen in her place. The archbishop agreed that the burden was becoming too great for her age and infirmity, and that she needed a "Simon" to help bear her heavy cross. Accordingly the voters proceeded at once to elect an Assistant Mother General. Sister Ludovica Scharf received nineteen votes out of the twenty-one, a result which proved the high esteem in which she was held by the other Sisters. In her humility she endeavored to advance reasons for a refusal to accept the office, but these were not deemed sufficient to relieve her of her trust. In the afternoon session the chapter elected a general council consisting of the following members: Sister Corona Muckenberger, first assistant; Sister Milburgis Fischer, second assistant; Sister Edmunda Schemmel, procuratrix; Sister Cecilia Lang, secretary.[5]

The results of the election were immediately sent to Archbishop Elder who replied:

> Cincinnati, August 1, 1887
>
> Mother Cunegunda
>
> Dear Reverend Mother:
>
> The Acts of your . . . Chapter, and the election of Sister Ludovica Scharf to be your Mother Coadjutrix have been made known to me.
>
> I hereby approve of the constitution of the Chapter and the election of Mother Coadjutrix, as well as the choice of the other Members of the Council.
>
> I congratulate you, dear Reverend Mother, on witnessing this fruit of your many years of prayer, labor, and anxiety. God has blessed you, and your little family has increased in numbers and wisdom and grace with God and men, until it has now become a full-grown Religious Congregation with its own government, fully prepared to perpetuate its holy work.
>
> May the peace and charity which have sanctified this beginning of your organization continue always to grow among you until it shall bring all and each of you to the

> eternal peace promised to those who leave all to follow the Lamb.
>
> Your Constitutions are still under consideration. Some of the persons who were examining them are absent from town. I will try to have them concluded as soon as I can.
>
> I give my affectionate blessing to you and Mother Coadjutrix, to your Council, and to all and each of your Sisters and pupils, and I ask your prayers.
>
> Your faithful servant in Christ,
>
> WILLIAM HENRY ELDER
> Archbishop of Cincinnati[6]

A second draft of the Constitutions, which had been revised in accordance with the suggestions of the "wise and holy priests," was drawn up and sent to Archbishop Elder in April, 1888.[7] These he approved temporarily on May 3.[8] Another section of the Rules, regarding schools and teachers, he also approved on July 22. In a letter of the same date, addressed to Sister Cecilia, he expresses his pleasure with his first reading of this part of the Rules and then adds:

> I congratulate you and thank your Community for your zeal and care in this regard. It will bring a great increase of glory to the Most Precious Blood of Our Lord — & of the protection over you of His Ever Blessed Mother. . . .
>
> "They who instruct many unto Justice, shall shine as stars for endless eternity" (Daniel XII, 3).[9]

But the whole code of Rules and Constitutions did not receive his final approbation until the following year, after they had been put into practice for some months. He was not satisfied until each article was expressed briefly and exactly so that the need of interpretation in individual cases would be reduced to a minimum. Finally, after they had been referred to Very Reverend Father Alexander, Rector of the Passionist monastery in Cincinnati,[10] and had been further amended so that the archbishop could say at last, "Altogether the Rules are well drawn:

& they have been approved by the provincial of the Franciscans,"[11] did he fix his own approval on September 8, 1889.[12]

Sister Ludovica brought to her office of Assistant General the fruits of the inner life which she had cultivated in quiet seclusion for more than thirty years. During that time, though lacking the opportunity for academic education, she had advanced far in the school of sanctity and had preserved the spirit which the first Sisters had imbibed from Father Brunner himself. Her native town was Gersheim in Bavaria, but she had come to this country at the early age of ten and remained for three years with the orphans at Thompson. On December 16, 1855, she entered the community as a postulant, and after three years was received into the novitiate. Having taken the oath of fidelity in 1861, she dedicated herself so wholeheartedly to the work of her perfection that she was permitted to make profession of vows in 1865,[13] a privilege granted to comparatively few in those times.

She spent nineteen years in prayer and hard labor in the convent at Egypt, Ohio, without thought of complaint, taking for granted that it all went with convent life and that one came to the convent to become a saint. The director, recognizing her worth, appointed her superior at Glandorf in 1876, where she served for eight years, and she subsequently held the same office at Celina and Minster.[14] Even after she was elected Assistant Mother General she remained at Minster until December, 1887, when she was called to the motherhouse at Maria Stein to relieve the aged Mother Kunigunda of her onerous duty of governing the Congregation.[15]

One of the first concerns to demand her attention was the profession of the three vows of religion by the majority of the Sisters. In 1888 the oath of fidelity, which had hitherto bound most of the "professed" Sisters, was discontinued and they were admitted to the profession of vows, temporary or perpetual, depending in most cases upon the number of years spent in the community. Up to this time a few of the Sisters had privately taken perpetual vows; the archbishop was "much disposed," however, to grant that consolation to most of the older Sisters who had not previously made temporary profession, except in the case of individuals for whom the council could raise good objections.[16] Even as late as 1890-91 Father Henry visited some of the convents to receive the vows, temporary or perpetual, of those Sisters who had not yet made them. Thereafter profession was made only at the motherhouse in accordance with the ritual[17] and after a retreat of at least three days.

The summer of 1888 witnessed the first solemn ceremony of investment and profession, which took place in the chapel after high Mass. Postulants who had been in the community for one year and had been found acceptable after being canonically examined by Father Henry, as representative of the archbishop,[18] were admitted to the rank of novice and received the habit and their names in religion. Novices for profession, having been similarly examined, made temporary profession for three years and received the veil.

It must have been one of the greatest joys of Mother Kunigunda's declining years to see so many of her children at one time become brides of Christ, bound to Him by the threefold tie of religion. That and the perpetual adoration before the Blessed Sacrament by day as well as by night, which was also introduced this year, were no doubt her best jubilee gifts.[19]

The memorable year 1888 marked the fiftieth anniversary of Mother Kunigunda's entrance into the convent at Loewenberg and her thirtieth as Mother Superior of the Congregation in America. The Sisters were preparing in all secrecy to make the most of the occasion, and a grand celebration, planned to the smallest detail, was set for August 2. Invitations had been sent out to all the Sisters living in the vicinity of the motherhouse, to a number of Precious Blood Fathers, and even to Archbishop Elder. The archbishop sent his regrets in the following words:

Mother Mary Kunigunda
Second Mother General, 1858-1887

> I would put myself to almost any inconvenience to be with you all on the happy occasion; and even duties that could be transferred to other days would not hinder my going. But unhappily — it is right in the middle of our diocesan retreat, and I am obliged to be with the clergy. So I must be content to assist in heart and mind which I shall certainly do. I hope to wrote her a word before the time comes.[20]

Before the time did come, however, Mother Kunigunda had learned of the affair, and she immediately cut short all preparations by a circular letter addressed to the whole community. The Sisters were undoubtedly disappointed and chagrined, but at the same time they could not help but admire the spirit of abnegation and self-effacement that prompted the following lines:

> Maria Stein, Ohio
> July 13, 1888
>
> My dear Sisters One and All,
>
> Since I have somewhat recovered from my long and serious illness, I feel that, next to God, I am greatly indebted to you for your many prayers and for your childlike sympathy in my sufferings, which I must, however, regard as a favor. How often during my sickness was I assured by the Sisters on the different missions that they were praying earnestly for me! May God richly reward you! I beg you to continue to pray not only for me but also for my assistant, Mother Ludovica, and for the welfare of the whole community. I also request all of you to lighten her heavy burden by your childlike obedience. By so doing, you are also obeying me and you will thereby be the joy of my declining days.
>
> Now I must make another remark which I wish to be heeded. Recently it was brought to my ears that you are contemplating some kind of jubilee festival on the coming August 2 in memory of my entrance into the Congregation fifty years ago. I must herewith strictly forbid anything

whatsoever that does not correspond with the spirit of our community and our rule of life. We are poor brides of a voluntarily poor and despised Jesus, and it should be our endeavor as His disciples here in His school to prepare ourselves for an eternal jubilee in the life to come. O Sisters, how could I under any other circumstances think back on this day of my entrance into the community and my reception among those exemplary Sisters whom all of us even to the remotest times must ever keep before our eyes as models! How could I on this day give a single thought to our esteemed and beloved Father Brunner! It would occasion me more pain than joy of heart.

If you wish to make my happiness complete, please offer on this day your Holy Communion and all your prayers throughout the day in thanksgiving for the grace of my vocation and in supplication for a holy death. All of you will remain in your convents, each one at her post, and forget about such celebrations.

Cordially greeting all of you and wishing you all graces through the Precious Blood, I am

Your MOTHER KUNIGUNDA[21]

True to his word the archbishop sent the following letter of congratulation to the revered jubilarian:

Cincinnati, Ohio
July 25, 1888

Reverend Mother Cunegunda

Dear Reverend Mother:

Praise be to God! and all happiness to you and to your Community! May He be ever praised and thanked for all the graces bestowed on you — and spread so wide around you during this half-century. It is not a little mercy that He has given you grace to be faithful in your own soul. But to have chosen you as His instrument to form all your great Community into loving spouses of Christ — and through them to have done so much for His glory in your adoration and good works, and through them again to have

> taught so many pupils His holy love and service: to have chosen you for His instrument and given you the strength to do this great work. It is only when we get to heaven that we will know how to praise and thank Him right.
>
> Meanwhile let us all praise Him as well as we can. The retreat of our clergy will hinder me from being with you in body, but in spirit I shall be closely united, particularly in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.
>
> And that you may have a sensible reminder, I send you a crucifix — image of the divine fountain out of which the Most Precious Blood continually flows for the sanctification of the world. I blessed the *Figure* in an informal way, but I would like Very Reverend Father Drees to give a formal blessing to the crucifix. The Figure was not on the cross when I blessed it.[22]
>
> And I wish every blessing in this life and the next to you and to all your daughters in religion and all your pupils, and I beg your prayers.
>
> Your faithful servant in Christ,
>
> William Henry Elder
> Archbishop of Cincinnati[23]

The summer of 1888 was also important from an educational standpoint. Sister Cecilia, the directress of the normal school, was deeply interested in the advancement of the teachers and in the general improvement of the schools under their charge. The concern nearest her heart was to prepare the Sisters to give the children a thorough training in their holy religion, while keeping abreast of the times in imparting secular knowledge. This latter aim derived its importance especially from the fact that some of the Sisters were engaged to teach in public schools, such as at Minster and Glandorf, and had to meet state requirements.

The curriculum of the normal school had hitherto included only the common branches, but a trend toward a demand for the higher education of teachers was beginning. Foreseeing the requirements that would eventually be made both by state and diocesan boards of education, Sister Cecilia wisely determined to meet them.

Accordingly, the decision was reached to send two Sisters to the Academy of St. Mary of the Woods in Indiana to take higher courses from the Sisters of Providence. Permission from Archbishop Elder was sought and obtained, as the following extract from a letter shows:

> I heartily approve your proposal to have some of your Sisters take lessons in the higher branches, from the Sisters of Providence in the diocese of Vincennes: not only two, but more, if you wish to send them. I give the necessary dispensation to conform to the rules in the house in which they shall be, and to be exempt accordingly from their own.[24]

Two young professed Sisters were sent: Sister Victoria Drees, a niece of Father Henry, who took the regular academic branches; and Sister Attala Missler, who specialized in music and painting. After a year of study the two Sisters returned to help Sister Cecilia teach in the normal school.

Another problem which faced the directress of schools at this time was the working out of a uniform course of study to be followed in all the schools taught by the Sisters of the Precious Blood. Such a project was made imperative by an article of the newly approved Rules, which read: "Uniformity should be aimed at in school discipline, plan of instruction, and method of teaching."[25]

Sister Cecilia addressed herself, heart and soul, to the task, enlisting the aid of the fifty school teachers who had gathered in the motherhouse in the summer of 1889 to make their annual retreat. Several priests, too, were invited to give their opinions and offer suggestions, since the Sisters did not trust wholly to their own judgment, though only one responded, Father Godfrey Schlachter. He gave, at least, some words of encouragement in a letter addressed to Sister Cecilia, excerpts from which follow:

> Your Course of Studies is, I think, well graded and thorough. A copy of the same, with the practical points on school government, in every Sister's desk, must eventually, if faithfully carried out, bring credit to your schools. . . . On the whole, my dear Sister, you are doing a glorious work in Christ's own vineyard, not on the world's stage — and you are doing it well. I don't see why you should be discouraged in the least. It would do you good, at times, if you could start from your home and visit the various schools and visit those homes that are blessed through these schools. There is much more good done by our School Sisters than many — even the School Sisters themselves — have any idea.[26]

The fear had been entertained that misunderstandings would arise among the Sisters themselves and that a clash of opinions about the new course of study would ensue, but such was not the case. All were one heart and one soul in making necessary modifications and in working out the final details. That their efforts were blessed with success is attested by the letters of several learned and eminent schoolmen,[27] foremost among them the Honorable John Hancock, State Commissioner of Schools, who wrote:

> I find the accompanying Course of Study for District and Parochial Schools carefully and wisely drawn.
>
> If I might be permitted a suggestion or two, it would be to the effect that possibly arithmetic and the technicalities of grammar may be made a little too prominent in the first two or three years of the course. I think, also, that it will be found desirable and possible in those lower grades to complete a Reader in each year. The thought of beginning a new Reader at the commencement of the school year is an attractive one to little children. The provisions for supplementary reading matter is an admirable feature of the course.[28]

The sphere of the Sisters' activity in the schools was widening from year to year as more and more requests were made for teachers. In 1888 two schools were taken over in Indiana, at Garrett and Wanatah; in 1890, four more were staffed with Sisters of the Precious Blood, namely, at Fulda, Miamisburg, and Himmelgarten, in Ohio, and at Germantown, Missouri; in 1891 district schools at St. Henry and Carthagena were opened, and the girls' school at St. John's, which had been relinquished by the Sisters in 1883 on account of bickerings among the parishioners, was again taken up.[29]

In March, 1891, another project was undertaken by the Sisters of the Precious Blood — the care of St. Joseph's Home in Dayton, Ohio. Like St. Mary's Institute at Minster, this home had been founded for orphans of victims of the cholera plague in 1849, but it was started not by religious but by a small group of Catholic-minded laymen of Dayton.

The work had a small and noiseless beginning, but as the Society of St. Joseph, the organization formed by the group of laymen who had charge of the home, increased its membership, the project grew proportionately. The advent of ten Sisters of the Precious Blood in 1891 brought new hope for the future of the home. Sister Coelina Mueller was directress, while Sisters Electa Fleck and Flora Maier formed the teaching personnel.[30]

An historical sketch of St. Joseph's Home in the *Catholic Telegraph* has this to say about the role which the Sisters play in moulding the lives of the little orphans confided to their care:

> It is, or should be, unnecessary to say to Catholic readers what it meant for the Home thus to come under the influence and care of a Sisterhood of the Church. Duty has for them the highest, most sacred significance. They never lose sight of the eternal truth that the work they do, no matter what its sphere, is God's work, and they His human instruments for performing it. It must be apparent that when work is so regarded, every effort will be made by the worker to bring to it the utmost diligence and fidelity, care taken to maintain the highest personal efficiency. Especially

is this true when that work is on the plastic mind of childhood, where a future for time and eternity is to have its groundstones laid. In addition they are women and nature aids religion in their ministration. The maternal love they [the orphans] never knew, or must only sorrowfully remember as a lost possession . . . [they] should find in ample and beneficent measure when ruled by Sisters. A visit to the St. Joseph Home of Dayton will prove such to be the case among the 92 little boys and girls it shelters. No hard and fast rules, such as sow the seeds of hatred of authority in youthful hearts, here obtain. Instead are the regulations of a well-ordered home, enforced by that authority which is established on the truest of loves. That parental affection that permits authority to be set aside for childish whims is perhaps as fatal as the rule of authority unsupported by love. Between these two lies the golden mean that insures happiness for parents and children and makes the home what it should be. As nearly as is possible under our present institutional methods, this is found at the Home, and happy, healthy children, careful, tender guardians, dwell therein. . . .

Naturally the education of the children, next to their physical well-being, claims attention. That this is thorough goes without saying when their teachers are Sisters of the Precious Blood. It is also practical. The children, on reaching manhood and womanhood, must necessarily join the army of the world's workers, and they are fitted to take their place and keep it when that time arrives. The boys are given also manual training and the girls are taught housekeeping in all its branches, as well as general sewing. In one place at least, our convent schools, "the bright shining needle" that proved an inspiration for the poet, that many another pen has praised, still holds its honored place; and still within cloistered walls it works out with artistic skill and diligence all its old marvels in design and colorings fairly imitating nature in her leaves and flowers. . . .[31]

The great-hearted Christian charity that brought St. Joseph's Home into existence recalls the name of Father

Andrew Kunkler, who was in truth a father of orphans. Not only had he been instrumental in establishing an orphans' home for girls at Minster, but through a little orphaned boy whom he had once fathered and who later became Bishop Dwenger, he was indirectly responsible for the magnificent works of charity and education that flourished in the diocese of Fort Wayne during the episcopate of his former "little Joseph."

Resuming his story where we left off, in 1874, at the time when he willingly shifted the honor and the burden of the provincialate to the shoulders of Father Austermann, we find him for some years still at Minster, esteemed, revered, and loved by his flock as a saint. The mounting number of years of his pastorate there, which eventually reached thirty-five (1850-1885), served only to intensify the conviction of the people that Father Kunkler was "another Christ." He moved among them, healing, blessing, and sanctifying them as the Good Shepherd had done among His own people in far-off Galilee, or as more recently the sainted Curé d'Ars had done among his beloved French in the wooded valleys of Les Dombes.

But Father Kunkler realized that he could no longer do for his people all that he had been able to do in the golden season of his vigorous youth and manhood. Though as an old man it was hard to break the ties that bound him to the place, yet because the man was bigger than his office he asked to be relieved of the responsibility and the burden, and to engage in mission work in the West, where, unhampered, he could prepare his soul in peace for death.

The next several years he worked indefatigably, giving missions in Kansas and Missouri. Eternity alone will reveal the untold good he did by his unremitting labor for souls, over whom he had an extraordinary influence. Letters that he wrote to the Sisters of the Precious Blood at this period give instances of conversions which seem to have been brought about by almost miraculous intervention.[32] The power he exercised over hearts was but the overflowing of the charity that was consuming him who would spend himself and be spent for souls.

Father Kunkler felt that his strength was slowly ebbing away and that death was in the offing, as he clearly intimated in a letter to the Sisters at Minster: "I beg you to help me a bit to prepare for a good death, for I believe it is soon time. They call me locally only 'the old man,' and the Sisters at the hospital . . . name or call me 'grandpa.' I must be getting old."[33]

Four years passed, however, before he was summoned, but then the end came quickly. The closing scene of his life was highly dramatic in its enactment. The setting was the little church in Weston, Missouri, where Father Kunkler was giving a mission; the time was the evening of December 6, 1889. Having announced the text of the next day's sermon, "Remember, O man, thy last end, and thou shalt never sin," he suffered a stroke of paralysis from which he died several days later. His death was a much more effective sermon than the most eloquent discourse he could have preached.

In accordance with his own wishes his body was brought to Minster for burial. He wanted to lie down among his flock, whom he had guided and fed for so many years. Solemn funeral services were held in the presence of Archbishop Elder, Bishop Dwenger, more than fifty priests, and a vast concourse of people, many of whom had known Father Kunkler from their babyhood. With the simplicity of a child, Bishop Dwenger portrayed the life and virtues of him who had been more than father to the speaker:

> "The whole people of Israel wept and grieved because Judas Machabeus was fallen in battle."
>
> Thus we read in the Old Testament. We also read in the New Dispensation of Jesus, Who, because He was God, was infinitely holy: "And Jesus wept. And the people said: 'See how He loved him [Lazarus].' "
>
> We, too, are shedding tears today as we pay our last respects to our beloved Father, this venerable "prince" of a priest. We are not ashamed to cry like children over the remains of him whom we loved and who loved us in return, of him who was such a good father to all of us.

> About forty years ago, a mother lay dying. She had been well fortified with the consolations of our holy religion. Beside her lay unconscious her sick little boy, whom she was about to leave behind. When she had passed away, Father Kunkler took that sick child in his arms and pressed it to his heart as a mother would have done. Then he placed his own mantle about it and carried it to his room. There he cared for the lad like a father. This child recovered, grew up well and strong and is living today — yes, he is standing here before you to pay the last respects to his spiritual Father, his best friend.
>
> Indeed, all of us have reasons to do the same, for who is there among us that was not loved by this Father? What a precious memory — that of our departed Father! What a loving picture is presented to our mind's eye, no matter from what angle we observe him! He was a "prince" of a priest — always at work, especially in former times when there was a dearth of priests and when the service of God often meant real hardships.

After giving a brief sketch of Father Kunkler's priestly career Bishop Dwenger continued:

> You all knew him; it is unnecessary to go into further detail about his life. Here is the altar upon which he offered the Holy Sacrifice so many times; this is the church he built; this is the pulpit where he stood so long. What a beautiful portrait was Father Andrew Kunkler as a priest at the altar! It is always an elevating sight — a grand spectacle — to behold a priest as representative of Jesus Christ, offering up the Immaculate Lamb. But what an inspiring picture was our Father Kunkler as he stood at the altar! Aglow with angelic devotion! An angel indeed — a true priest of God!
>
> And in the confessional! Was he not often besieged until late into the night? Why? Ah, he was such a good and loving confessor! Consider what a burden it is to hear confessions and what hardships are connected with it! How fatiguing it is to instruct the ignorant, to arouse the luke-

warm, to enkindle cold hearts, to admonish the erring, to dispense help and consolation to all! And yet, what a confessor he was! Did he not carry the burden of each of his penitents? He was an apostolic man, an angel of love in the confessional. He sat there, whole days and nights at times, working with the greatest patience.

What a wise teacher and spiritual guide he was! You know how often he ascended this pulpit to announce to you the word of God. You heard his apostolic sermons — burning words that came from the heart and went to the heart. Yes, that was his supreme joy — to preach the word of God. Even when he was often indisposed or ill, yet he preached, and was it not a pleasure, a blessing to hear him? Did not everyone believe they were listening to a holy apostle, and were not all hearts drawn to him? Indeed, he had the gift of tongues, which the Holy Ghost had imparted to him in an extraordinary degree. But now his lips are mute; never again shall you hear him from this pulpit; never again shall you perceive his voice admonishing you. That hand so often raised to absolve you from your sins, those consecrated fingers that had so often elevated the sacred Host, are now stark in death and lie motionless before us.

You know the joy he found in the children and the love he had for them. He was like our Blessed Savior, a friend of children. Here there are many among you whom he baptized, many whom he led to the Holy Table and whose first confession he heard. You remember with what love you crowded about your spiritual father and how you hung on him who always said with our divine Savior, "Let the little ones come to Me." With what joy and care he instructed you children! But now he can no longer give you his blessing, dear children; you can never again hang on his cassock. You will never see him again. What a sad thought!

What zeal he displayed toward the sick! All wanted good Father Andrew to come. Even when other priests were present, the sick begged for Father Kunkler. Why? They yearned to see their saintly Father once more; they desired to hear words of comfort from his lips. Many a time he felt worse than the sick themselves, yet he always went to them.

I know that he often spent four nights out of the week at the bedside of the sick. This was indeed more difficult and demanded greater sacrifice from him than from an ordinary priest, because of his very sensitive nature. Moreover, he entertained such love for his neighbor that he could say with St. Paul: "Who is suffering among you and I am not suffering with you?" The pains of the sick, the severance from their own, the grief of their family — all this he comprehended and felt deeply.

I not only believe but am convinced that Father Kunkler often knew the state of soul of a dying person. When he was called to the deathbed of a very lax Christian who had waited until his life's strength had almost ebbed away and who was all but conscious, then Father Kunkler would tremble while the earnest look on his countenance and his quivering lips gave evidence of the passage of an unhappy soul. I know that at other times he would return home comforted and after he had offered the Holy Sacrifice for the deceased he would become joyful again. In a number of instances he was made aware of the state of a departed soul while he was praying for her. It was his great charity for his neighbor that enabled him to perceive things of which others were not sensible. God granted him special graces that were denied to others: wisdom and insight.

You know, dearly beloved, how truly humble our departed Father was. His humility recalls the words of our divine Savior: "Learn of Me because I am meek and humble of heart." How humble he was in his labors and what great good he accomplished! But his humility, his reserve, and his meekness are so well known to you I need not expatiate on them.

His zeal for souls! How can I begin to describe it! Had it any limits? No. Father Kunkler was indefatigable. Even when he was sick and suffering and overwhelmed with contradictions, he was ever the same untiring laborer. Although there were souls that caused him great anguish, and although there were ungrateful children for whom he would have given his life, who cut him to the heart, yet he always remained calm. With what patience and love he bore with them and loved them! Truly, his love of neighbor and his zeal for souls were immeasurable. Small wonder that everyone had recourse to him in the ordinary circumstances of daily life as well as in confession! He was a dear comforting angel with a heart that lovingly embraced all in its love. Hence it was that everybody loved him — yes, was impelled to love him — and held him in the highest esteem.

You know, moreover, with what love he was attached to the Congregation. Was he not indeed a true religious? How loyally he stood by the Community of the Precious Blood! We well know how kind he was toward all. He it was who, at the time when there were only a few members, sustained the failing courage of Father Salesius Brunner and after the latter's death was unanimously chosen to succeed him in the office of provincial. What humility, but also what loving zeal he then displayed! We priests can well recall the imposing scene when we were all gathered about him pledging our obedience to him! How willing we were to comply with his every wish! Ah, he was our spiritual father — kind, loving, and zealous. God blessed his work and the community began to flourish. However, he refused this burdensome office the third time, as if his humility would not permit it.

Here in your midst, parishioners of Minster, he consumed his strength, and when he realized that he was no longer strong enough to answer all the demands that were made upon him — visiting all the sick and hearing all the confessions alone — when, I say, he could do it no longer, he resigned his pastorate as much for your sake as for his own. When, as I am told, he stood in this pulpit to address you for the last time and to bid farewell, he said that although he could not remain in your midst any longer, yet he desired to be buried among you, his loving children.

Only a short time elapsed when in the full tide of his missionary activity he was suddenly struck with paralysis. He had preached that very afternoon and in the evening attended the English sermon of his young colleague, Father Norbert Groth. Afterward he gave Benediction. Then he turned to the people and said: "Tomorrow the sermons will

> deal with the four last things of man." He raised his voice and exclaimed: "Remember, O man, thy last end, and thou shalt never sin." Father Kunkler had noticed that only about forty were present at the sermon. Burning with zeal for souls and already seized with dizziness and weakness, he called out still louder: "All of you be here tomorrow and I shall show you what is in store for you!"
>
> He staggered into the sacristy and fell upon the arm of one of the priests as he uttered the words: "My head aches so." His brain was alread affected and he was wholly unconscious. "Remember, O man, thy last end . . . " were his last words. Are they not worthy of a missionary? Truly, his was a holy death. Father Kunkler could say in all truth: "The zeal for Thy house hath consumed me." O thrice holy death!
>
> Beloved friends, this day is for us a sad day indeed — a day of the greatest sorrow. Let us pray for our Father, pray much for him and make sacrifices for him, for we certainly owe it to him. Who ever thought that Father Kunkler would suffer a stroke? This should remind us ever to be prepared. Recall to mind his many fatherly admonitions and follow them. Those people in Weston, Missouri, all came the next morning and Father Kunkler showed them the four last things in a way that he had never done before. What the zealous missionary had been unable to do when living, his corpse with its unspoken sermon effected after death.
>
> And I? Oh, when I look into that dear, dead face, so loving and transfigured in death; when I behold that countenance so cold and yet so life-like — the countenance of my beloved Father — ah, then I must weep — it is crying out to me, "Child, we shall see each other again in heaven." Amen.[34]

As the bishop concluded he broke down completely. Many of his listeners, clergy and people alike, who had been following his words with tear-dimmed eyes now gave full vent to their grief and wept unrestrainedly. Before the blessing of the corpse Archbishop Elder spoke a few words in English, exhorting the bereaved parishioners to pray for the repose of the soul of their beloved father and friend, even though he did not seem to need their prayers.[35]

A long procession made up of thousands of people from Minster and neighboring parishes wended its way to the cemetery, where the choir paid its last tribute of song and the final blessing was imparted. The monument that stands over Father Kunkler's grave today bears witness to the love and devotion of his flock and helps to keep his memory alive. But a more lasting memorial lives in the hearts of his people and confreres who still speak in the most affectionate terms of "good Father Kunkler."

Mother Kunigunda's days, too, were fast running out. At the time of the death of Father Kunkler, whom she mourned as a lost father and friend, she had been bedfast for more than a year, suffering from a growing inflammation of the legs. Because of a fall her condition grew critical and her pains became a torture. She endured all with admirable patience, always greeting with a smile of welcome the Sisters who would come to offer sympathy in her sufferings.

Through the election of Sister Ludovica as coadjutrix, Mother Kunigunda had been relieved to a great extent of the principal duties of her office; yet her interest in the community, which she had guarded for more than thirty years, never waned. She was one of the last links between the present and the past: she had witnessed the hard beginnings in the early days at Loewenberg; she had endured all the vicissitudes, labors, and hardships of pioneer life in America; she had watched with maternal solicitude the gradual growth of the Congregation until it had become in the designs of Providence a large and useful organization in the Church, recognized as such by both state and ecclesiastical authorities, but preserving at the same time the primitive spirit she had taken such pains to keep alive through all the years. What consolation the following words of Archbishop Elder must have brought her in her last illness:

> Among the blessings which I have to thank God most for in the past year and those preceding it is the great help He gives me in the good religious of the various communities in the diocese. And among these yours is one of the most dear to me, because you are so numerous, because you are so ready to work in the places and the ways which seem to me best for souls, and above all, because you keep so near to Our Lord by your constant adoration, and therefore draw down so many blessings on all the diocese![36]

These words were like an *imprimatur* placed upon her life's work.

In the spring of 1891, after more than two years of continual suffering, Mother Kunigunda became visibly worse. Her strength was failing fast. For weeks she could not lie down but had to be propped up in bed. On Sunday evening, July 12, she received the Last Sacraments, after which her pain became so intense that the bystanders were moved to tears. About two hours before her death, however, she became quite calm and remained so to the end. About 4:30 on the morning of July 15, Father Martin Dentinger, the chaplain of the motherhouse, stopped in the dying Mother's room on his way to give Holy Communion to the sick and gave her a final blessing with the ciborium. Less than an hour afterward, without the slightest sign of a death struggle, she passed to her reward.[37]

On Friday, July 17, solemn funeral services took place. Archbishop Elder came from Cincinnati to bestow a last mark of esteem on the deceased Mother whom he had always regarded as an exemplary religious; many priests of the Precious Blood were present to pay their last respects to a true friend of the missionaries; the Sisters from the neighboring convents and missions hastened to testify their love and devotion to their departed Mother. After the Office of the Dead had been chanted, a solemn Requiem Mass was offered with the archbishop as celebrant.[38]

Father Henry, who for years had been closely associated with Mother Kunigunda and who knew her intimately, delivered the funeral sermon, taking for his text: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. From henceforth now, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, for their works follow them" (Apoc. XIV, 13). His words were a challenge to the Sisters to follow in the footsteps of their beloved Mother, who had always walked before them as a shining example of every virtue, especially "simplicity, humility, patience, and resignation." Afterward the archbishop addressed the assembled community, pointing out the great debt of gratitude which they owed, next to God, to their revered Mother for her wonderful example and for the means she had placed at their disposal to be faithful to their own vocation. "Considering all this," the prelate continued,

> you can easily understand what great thanks you owe your beloved Mother Kunigunda. When I consider your community — how quickly it grew and spread — I see clearly the special guidance of the Holy Ghost in your saintly Founder and in your departed venerable Mother. True, the Holy Spirit operates in every devout soul, but He directed in a special manner your saintly Founder and your pious Mother, who endeavored so zealously to nurture the tender seedling. You know, dear Sisters, how very small your community was in the beginning. Consider it now. How large it has become! How widespread! Therefore, do not forget your Mother. Think often of her. Write down all that you know of her and treasure this manuscript. Each one ought to try to appropriate for herself something of her beautiful virtues or ways.

The archbishop further showed how the whole life of Mother Kunigunda could be reduced to one simple formula — doing the will of God day by day — which, after all, is the whole secret of sanctity. He concluded by exhorting all present to pray for the repose of her soul.[39]

That afternoon Archbishop Elder revealed his own simplicity of heart in a touching incident. As several of the Sisters were escorting him through the convent, they pointed out Mother Kunigunda's death chamber. The kindly prelate suggested that they enter and pray five *Paters* for the deceased. Kneeling at the bedside he led the prayers and the Sisters responded. It was an act worthy of a prelate of the Church![40]

Mother Kunigunda had gone home, but her work and her spirit were to live on in her successors. During the last few years of her life radical changes had taken place in the community; a new regime had supplanted the old. Aged though she was, she adapted herself to the new conditions because she recognized in them a part of that eternal design into which all occurrences fit like so many pieces of mosaic, forming in their totality a masterpiece of the Divine Will. Several of her cherished plans — building projects — which were started before her death she did not live to see completed. It was a part of that same divine plan that they be developed and carried to fruition by her successor, Mother Ludovica.

Chapter II

PROGRESS UNDER MOTHER LUDOVICA

LITTLE change in the administration of affairs in the community was occasioned by Mother Kunigunda's death. Mother Ludovica had been virtually holding the reins of government since her election as coadjutrix four years previously, and now, though bereft of the wise counsel and kindly guidance of the aged Mother, she pressed resolutely forward on the highroad of progress. The large building projects that were undertaken under her direction and the notable increase in membership during her terms of office show the spirit of enterprise that characterized this truly humble handmaid of the Lord, who placed her sole confidence in the providence of God.

As early as 1887, plans for a new building and chapel at Maria Stein had been discussed by Mother Ludovica and the council, but it took some time for their dreams to materialize. Meanwhile, they had recourse to St. Joseph, promising that if he would by his intercession aid them in raising the required funds in the near future, the building would be placed under his patronage, a statue would be erected to his honor before which a votive light would be kept burning continually, and the novices would assemble around his image each Wednesday to offer prayers and songs of thanksgiving for favors received. They pledged themselves, moreover, to publish all donations and benefactions obtained through St. Joseph in the *Sendbote* and in the *Ohio Waisenfreund*.[1]

By the fall of 1889, definite preparations were under way to launch the project. Aid had come in unexpected ways. Mr. Cornelius Lang, a well-known architect of Columbus, Ohio, and the father of Sister Cecilia, had drawn up the plans for the proposed building gratis, and they had received the formal approval of Archbishop Elder after a committee appointed by him had inspected and reported favorably on them.[2] But when the archbishop examined the blueprints himself on the occasion of Father Kunkler's funeral in December, 1889, he expressed his dissatisfaction and asked with unwonted insistence that a change be made. The plans in question called for a larger building and chapel with a new relic chapel annexed. It had always been the custom of the Sisters to leave the main chapel to the Brothers and layfolk and to crowd into a small side chapel where they were unobserved in their devotions. Specifications of the present plans called for this old-time arrangement, to which the archbishop strongly objected. Bishop Dwenger, who was with him, wholly agreed with his view. Hence, it was decided to build the main chapel for the Sisters, and to annex a smaller side chapel for the holy relics. Another architect was called in for consultation and the result was that a much larger and more beautiful chapel was planned than the Sisters in their poverty had ever dreamed of.

The following spring, work began on the building and was carried on under the personal supervision of Father Martin Dentinger, the resident chaplain at Maria Stein, who had offered himself for the task. On June 1, 1890, the cornerstone, located in such a way as to serve for both the main chapel and the relic chapel, was laid, Archbishop Elder performing the ceremony. In the cornerstone were placed a short history of the Community of the Precious Blood in America, an account of the relics, an article describing the ceremony of the laying of the cornerstone and naming the prelates and clergy present, and the latest issue of each of the following newspapers and periodicals: *Der Wahrheitsfreund;* the *Baltimore Volkszeitung; America; Catholic News;* and the German paper of Mercer County, *Der Mercer County Bote,* together with a report of the last collection for Indians and Negroes. Father John Van den Broeck, who had, in November, 1846, laid the cornerstone of the primitive chapel at Maria Stein, and was also present at this ceremony, laughingly remarked to Archbishop Elder that on the former occasion

Mother Mary Ludovica, 1887-1899

he had been bishop, superior, and pastor (of St. John's), all rolled into one.[3]

Work on the building progressed slowly. Funds were not always on hand to meet necessary payments, and the Sisters were loath to run deep into debt. For three years the novices of the normal school at Greenwood, who were eager to join their fellow novices at the motherhouse, had prayed at each striking of the clock: "Pray for us, O dear St. Joseph and St. Anthony, that if it be the will of God our building will soon be finished and be free of debt." Mother Ludovica, on hearing of the clause in their petition "free of debt," remarked that under such terms it was no wonder that the building was so slow in construction.[4]

On account of difficulties and delays in the erection of the new edifice the school Sisters were forced to spend their vacation in the convent at Greenwood during the summers of 1890 and 1891. In 1892, however, the new chapel at Maria Stein was finished to the extent that they could assemble there for the annual summer institute. By August the work on the building was finally completed. The altars for the relic chapel were not finished at this time, however, and since Archbishop Elder wished to dedicate this holy sanctuary himself, but only after it was completely furnished, he granted full faculties to the provincial, Father Henry Drees, to dedicate the Sisters' chapel at once.

The unexpected news of the forthcoming dedication, which was set for August 23, created great joy and jubilation on all sides. In the Sisters' cup of happiness, however, were mingled a few drops of sorrow. Neither Mother Kunigunda, under whose inspiration the work had begun, nor Mother Ludovica, who had valiantly carried it on in the face of tremendous odds, was there to share in the celebration and enjoy the full fruits of her labors: the former had died the previous summer; the latter was abroad at the time.

The old chapel building, meanwhile, had been adapted for school purposes. The main chapel was converted into a large assembly room, familiarly known as the "Apostles' Hall" because of the life-sized pictures of the Twelve Apostles painted on the walls. A spacious study hall, several smaller classrooms, and an office were made from the Sisters' chapel, the sanctuary, and the sacristy. The lower floor of the building, which had formerly served as an infirmary and had contained besides the priests' dining room, was now fitted up as a music department.

On August 13, the students (novices and postulants) of the normal school came from Greenwood to make their home at the motherhouse. But there was so much work to be done that fall in remodeling the old chapel and preparing the new building for habitation that the school did not open until after November 22, the date finally set for the solemn ceremonies connected with the dedication of the relic chapel and the translation of the holy relics.[5] Sister Cecilia, aided by Sister Victoria, now recalled from the boarding school at Minster, was appointed to direct the studies of the normal students, who that year numbered fourteen.[6] The spiritual formation of all the novices and postulants was entrusted to Sister Margaret Schlachter, who since 1887 had been novice mistress at the motherhouse.[7]

Nine of the old students of the normal school were missioned in September, since teachers were needed in the four new schools taken over that fall at the following places: Russia, Ohio; St. Wendelin, Ohio; Fulton, Cincinnati, Ohio (St. Rose); and St. Joseph, Missouri (St. Francis).[8]

Archbishop Elder was wary of permitting the Sisters to take charge of a new school unless they had a sufficient number of well-trained teachers to justify their acceptance of it. "Be very careful," he admonished, "not to accept any school unless you see that you have good, competent teachers, well prepared for the work. Some of our communities have become seriously embarrassed by yielding to their desire to oblige priests and taking more schools than they could supply with *good* teachers."[9] All requests for accepting new schools were to be henceforth referred to him for approval.

The following summer Father L. J. Stukenborg, pastor of St. Mary's Church, Dayton, Ohio, obtained the permission of the archbishop to ask the Sisters of the Precious Blood to take over his school, hitherto taught by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur. In communicating his approval to the Mother Assistant at Maria Stein, the archbishop remarked: "And I will be very thankful if you can let him have good teachers."[10] In September, 1893, six teachers, among them Sister Lucy Ellerbrock as directress, were sent to St. Mary's School in Dayton. At first they stayed at St. Joseph's Orphanage, but by January they were able to move into their own home, a private residence which the community had purchased. Mary's Home, as it was called, was located on a pretty knoll about one hundred feet from the orphanage, where the Sisters still attended all chapel services. The next year, however, they had their own little chapel, where the Blessed Sacrament was reserved.[11] In granting this privilege Archbishop Elder wrote, "When I was in Rome, I made a particular supplication to our Holy Father for permission to grant this: as a comfort and encouragement to the good Sisters who are doing so much work for our children."[12] Holy Mass was offered once or twice a week in the new chapel, but for the rest of the week and for daily Benediction the Sisters were obliged to go over to St. Joseph's. In 1906, the community built a new Mary's Home — the present commodious residence on Xenia Avenue.

Other building improvements undertaken by Mother Ludovica included: a two-story brick house at Glandorf (1892) to provide more space for the various indoor occupations of the Sisters, such as sewing, weaving, and shoemaking; an annex to the Greenwood convent (1898) to serve as a rest home for the aged Sisters; a residence for teaching Sisters in Fort Wayne (1898), where a new church and school dedicated to the Precious Blood had been recently established; and a laundry building at the motherhouse (1898). Hot air furnaces were installed in several convents, but these were later replaced by steam heating, which provides a more equable temperature.[13]

All these projects were designed to answer a definite need — an increase in the membership of the community — a need which Mother Ludovica was putting forth every effort to meet. She foresaw that the continuance of perpetual adoration before the Blessed Sacrament in the convents, which was then considered the primary object of the Congregation,[14] and the acceptance of a larger number of schools[15] to broaden the educational activity of the Sisters, would be impossible unless there were a corresponding increase in the number of members to carry on these works. The net increase in membership had been rather discouraging for several years,[16] and there was a dearth of vocations from the States. In 1891, Father Paulinus Trost brought seven candidates from Europe, thus making the ratio of entrances to deaths for that year two to one.[17] Evidently, the hope of recruiting the ranks of the Sisters lay in securing more candidates from abroad.

Mother Ludovica, therefore, planned to make a trip to Europe primarily to establish a closer relationship between the motherhouse in America and the filial house in Schellenberg, which had been founded by Father Brunner for the express purpose of fostering and testing vocations for the American missions. The Sisters at Schellenberg had gradually lost sight of this original purpose of their foundation and were sending only a few candidates.

On May 3, 1892, Mother Ludovica set out on her long journey, taking with her as traveling companion Sister M. Mansuetta Graf. One of the most interesting features of this trip was their visit to the famous cathedral of Cologne, where the relics of the three holy kings are preserved and where they saw a crucifix that was said to be more than a thousand years old. At Schellenberg they found Sister Radygundis Gerteis, the erstwhile associate and successor of Mother Johanna Gruenfelder, still in charge of the small community, but she was growing old and feeble.[18] Father Jacob Marti, who had been there previously, was again pastor of the church and spiritual director of the Sisters, having been reassigned in May, 1890.[19]

There seems to have been no misunderstandings between him or the resident Sisters and their American visitors at this time, and the object of the visit was apparently accomplished. Sister Mansuetta returned early in August, bringing twenty-four candidates, while Mother Ludovica arrived in New York with twelve more a month later. Before landing, however, the last group was quarantined, since cholera had recently broken out in Europe, and they were forced to lie over several days in the harbor. Somehow their bags, trunks and other luggage escaped inspection despite the fear of contagion, and the travelers arrived at the motherhouse safely on September 22.[20]

In December of the following year (1893) Mother Ludovica, who had been almost unanimously re-elected to the office of Mother General the previous summer,[21] received an important communication from the Most Reverend Bishop of Chur, John Fidelis Battagli, concerning the convent at Schellenberg. The letter contained an account of the visitation (the first of its kind) which the bishop had made to the filial house at Schellenberg a short time before, out of a sense of duty, having ascertained that the said convent belonged under his jurisdiction. The bishop commented favorably on the religious spirit of the community, but expressed concern about the general health of the Sisters, fearing that the Rule was perhaps too strict. He also advised, in accordance with Canon Law, that a change be made in superiors. Sister Radygundis, who had been holding that office for fifteen years instead of the canonical six, showed readiness to be relieved of her burden as soon as a successor could be named. The prelate, moreover, revealed that a rumor was abroad to the effect that the Fathers of the Precious Blood were unwilling to serve as chaplains at Schellenberg any longer, since that post was too far distant from the American provincial house at Carthagena, Ohio.[22]

Mother Ludovica and her council, after prudently weighing all the circumstances, decided to send Sister Aldegundis Wuest, a person of a quiet and lovable disposition, to assist Sister Radygundis. Should she be found acceptable to the Sisters at Schellenberg, she was to succeed the aged superioress in her office.[23] In April, 1895, Mother Ludovica and Sister Margaret made a second trip to Europe. Their object was, as before, to enlist candidates for the American province and to make a visitation of the convent at Schellenberg. There Mother Ludovica discovered, to her disappointment, that certain members of the community were taking exception to the alleged extravagance of their new superioress, Sister Aldegundis. Investigation proved that the superioress was acting according to the instructions of Mother Ludovica regarding more nourishing food for the community in general and better medical care for the sick — recommendations that had been suggested in the letter of the Bishop of Chur. The Sisters on the whole seemed satisfied with conditions under the new regime, however, and the matter was settled temporarily.

Before returning home the two travelers visited Loewenberg, and in St. Mary's Church at Sagens prayed near the crypt that held the precious remains of their venerated foundress. They also collected a number of books and manuscripts that had belonged to Father Brunner to bring back as souvenirs to America.

Mother Ludovica was the first to return from Europe, bringing with her nine candidates. The party was welcomed at the motherhouse on July 23.

Sister Margaret remained abroad several months to take a course in the famous water-cure treatments at Woerishofen under Reverend Doctor Sebastian Kneipp. Sister Victoria from Schellenberg, who eventually accompanied her to America, was her companion during this time.[24] Meanwhile letters were received both from Sister Margaret and from Schellenberg, disclosing the real state of affairs in the convent there. Dissatisfaction was again rife among a number of the Sisters because of misunderstandings that evidently had not been cleared up during Mother Ludovica's visitation. A complete break with the motherhouse in America was being agitated and Father Jacob Marti was sympathetic with the movement. The causes of complaint were threefold. In the first place, the Sisters claimed that a superioress from America had been forced upon them against their will. Secondly, a Sister from America could not govern well, since she was unacquainted with the customs and laws of the land. Finally, the Sisters bore it ill that Mother Ludovica and her companion had secretly conferred with the Bishop of Chur during their visit there, and had asked for the removal of Father Marti, whose place was to be taken by a secular priest.

In a letter addressed to Bishop Battagli, Mother Ludovica answered each of these objections clearly and decisively. Sister Aldegundis was not a native American, but had been born and educated in Canton St. Gall, Switzerland. Mother Ludovica had been reluctant to make a change in superiors at Schellenberg, and had done so not only at the suggestion of the bishop but also on the advice and with the approval of Father Marti, the older Sisters, and especially the novice mistress at Schellenberg, whose name happened to be Sister Margaret also. With regard to her conference with the Bishop of Chur when she was in Switzerland, Mother Ludovica denied any intended secrecy on her part. She had gone to the bishop at the request of Father Marti himself, who had not only expressed the desire to be removed from Schellenberg but had publicly declared it in the parish church. She further expressed her willingness to recall Sister Aldegundis at any time and to permit any of the Sisters from Schellenberg to come to America should they intimate a desire to do so, as some had done before. For the rest, should it come to a complete break, the community in America would feel no further obligation toward the filial house in Liechtenstein.[25]

The answer of the Bishop of Chur is not on file. However, the following July, 1896, Sister Aldegundis was recalled to America and the Sisters at Schellenberg elected according to Canon Law their own superior, Sister Meinrada Miller.[26] Peace and contentment settled down once more on the Schellenberg, but the ax had fallen, making a gash in the branch, which was destined eventually to be wholly severed from the trunk.

While this controversy was going on, Mother Ludovica's health was gradually failing. For five months she had been suffering from throat trouble and from a bronchial infection that was in danger of developing into tuberculosis. Archbishop Elder, on hearing of her illness, addressed to her the following words of sympathy and encouragement:

> I was very sorry to learn last week, from Sister Cecilia, of your long-continued sickness. Please let me hear from you whether you are improving. . . .
>
> I know you are sanctifying your affliction by acts of holy submission, and offering all to obtain God's grace for yourself and your Sisters. And I feel sure you offer some of them for me and for my responsibilities. You know well the value of suffering: what force it gives to prayer. While Our Lord could have redeemed us by prayer, He was pleased to do it by suffering. And these days of His Ascension show what our suffering is intended for — to make us near to Him here and hereafter. And this glorious Pentecost brings us the Holy Ghost to strengthen and comfort us.[27]

Doctor Stevenson of Fort Recovery prescribed a change in climate, advising her to spend some months in California. When the matter was referred to Archbishop Elder for a decision, he consulted an eminent physician of Cincinnati, Doctor Whitaker, who agreed with the statement of Doctor Stevenson on the case. Hence, the archbishop gave his consent and promised prayers for the restoration of her health.[28]

Taking with her Sister Emma Nunlist, who was afflicted with a large goiter, Mother Ludovica left in July for Banning, California, where since 1890 the Fathers of the Precious Blood had been superintending St. Boniface's Indian School. There Father Florian Hahn was the *servus servorum servarumque,*[29] as he styled himself, and the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet conducted the school. Of these Father Florian wrote: "Three Sisters teach school; one cooks, one sews, one paints and watches the girls, one bakes bread, one presides at the dining table and scolds the boys, one is the 'Mother' of all."[30]

Father Florian and the Sisters of St. Joseph gave the two visitors a royal welcome and made their twelvemonth stay at the Indian mission most pleasant and beneficial. Healthful diversions were afforded them by the lively pranks of the Indian and Mexican children, by long tramps, and by drives in a "top-buggy" to the Indian reservations, where they observed firsthand the mode of life of the various tribes and made friends with the chiefs and their squaws.[31] One result of their newly aroused interest in the Indians was probably the opening of a mission by the Sisters of the Precious Blood in Arizona several years later.

Mother Ludovica took back with her to Ohio a souvenir of her trip that was not so pleasant — a deformity which was the result of an accident and which she was destined to carry to her grave. Several ribs having been broken in the accident caused by a runaway horse, she was never again able to sit or stand erect, but leaned far to the right from the waist. Her throat condition was improved, however, and she was able to resume the duties of her office for the two remaining years of her term.

Before relinquishing her burden of office, Mother Ludovica made one more attempt to increase the membership of the community by obtaining candidates from abroad. This time she did not intend to go to Europe herself, but asked Archbishop Elder for his written permission to send two others, Sister Lidwina Koller and Sister Margaret Schlachter, on the trip. At first the archbishop was reluctant to grant his approval, pointing out the expense entailed, the risk of accepting unsuitable candidates whom it would be embarrassing to dismiss, and the advisability of recruiting the community from America as an inducement for other young American girls to enter.[32] The reasons Mother Ludovica gave, especially the continuance of perpetual adoration, found weight with him,[33] however, and he finally sent his approval together with a letter of authorization to bring candidates over to this country. "I wish a happy voyage, a full success, and a safe return to the travelers, whoever they may be," he wrote; and then, referring to the Spanish-American War, which was then in progress, he added significantly: "They must not let the Spaniards catch them. There are nuns enough in Spain without stealing yours."[34] Perhaps because of fear of the Spaniards or because the final approval of the archbishop came so late that arrangements could not be made for that year, the two Sisters did not set out on their European trip until the following April, 1899. They returned on July 27, bringing with them twelve candidates and two children who were not old enough to enter the community.[35]

Sister Margaret, who had been elected a member of the chapter on July 6, was home in time for the election of officers on August 10. That year Archbishop Elder made his first formal visitation at the motherhouse, arriving on August 8 with Father Francis M. Quatman of Sidney, Ohio, as his interpreter for those Sisters who could not speak English.[36] The archbishop also presided for the first time at the election of officers which took place after the celebration of a solemn Mass *coram Archiepiscopo*. In the morning session Sister Emma Nunlist, the superioress of the convent at Thompson, was elected to the office of Mother General. Before they proceeded to the election of the other officers the archbishop suggested that, because of the importance of the educational activities of the Sisters, the directress of schools be a regularly elected member of the council. The result of the elections was as follows: Mother Ludovica (who was to retain the title of Mother), first assistant; Sister Corona Muckenberger, second assistant; Sister Margaret Schlachter, secretary; Sister Mansuetta Graf, treasurer; Sister Cecilia Lang, directress of schools.[37]

Had the Sisters had their own way, Mother Ludovica would have been re-elected for a third term. But she insisted that the laws of the Church be strictly carried out and no exception be made in her regard. For twelve years she had labored faithfully in her quiet way for the interests of the Congregation, making such improvements as would better enable the Sisters to realize the aims of their vocation while endeavoring to keep out the spirit of the world. She was happy to pass on her responsibility of office to the newly elected Mother Emma Nunlist, whose sterling character she had come to know during their sojourn in the West.

Chapter III

MOTHER EMMA

MOTHER EMMA, a woman of keen intellect, broad vision, delightful humor, and commanding personality, was above all a woman of God, a true religious. "I never talked to Mother Emma," attested Archbishop McNicholas, "without feeling that I was in the presence of a very saintly religious."[1] Though she had little opportunity to develop her natural talents by formal training in the schools, she made good use of each opportunity for self-improvement from the time she came as a little girl of nine to live with the Sisters in the convent at Egypt until 1899, when she was entrusted with the highest authority in the Community of the Precious Blood. Mother Emma was born in Erlinsbach, Switzerland, on June 5, 1856, and came with her father to this country at a tender age. After his death she was placed under the care of the Sisters. On December 8, 1869, she was received into the community as a postulant.[2]

For a number of years Mother Emma was in charge of the domestic work at various mission places. Besides her household tasks she found time for wide reading, which broadened her views and helped to fashion her into a "self-made" woman. Her administrative ability and her extraordinary common sense had long been recognized by her superiors, who before her election to the office of Mother General, had entrusted her successively with the management of several religious houses. Her responsibilities as Mother Superior brought into sharp relief those qualities of character which so endeared her to the Sisters that they later recalled her to the office for two successive terms and then begged that the Holy See would extend her term one year longer.

Her glowing zeal for the glory of God and her staunch championship of the right did not make Mother Emma less human. She had the heart of a mother for her daughters, and no man, whether prince or prelate, could trammel their rights with impunity. She was as intrepid as a warrior in defending what she believed was right, but once she perceived that she was in the wrong, she was as simple as a child in acknowledging her error. Kind but firm, usually prudent yet venturesome, ambitious for improving conditions without being worldly, Mother Emma went her way courageously, making friends and making foes because she walked the way of truth and was uncompromising when principles were at stake.

True, she had her faults; she would not have been human had she not displayed at times the weaknesses to which all of us have fallen heir. Perhaps it was this very human side of her character that made her all the more likeable. Impetuosity caused her to make hasty decisions at times and to pass quick judgments. More than one step taken in a moment of urgency without due deliberation was cause for regret later. She possessed a strong determination, which sometimes bordered on stubbornness, to carry through some pet project even against the better judgment of others. Clash of opinions with its unpleasant consequences sometimes resulted. Her utter frankness, too, irked several individuals who did not like to hear the truth about themselves.

But for the most part she was loved and respected, not only by her own Sisters, but by a host of friends outside the convent whom she had met in her travels and who had been consciously influenced by her deep spirituality. "Let me assure you," wrote Father Celestin A. Freriks, at the time of her death, "that I shall make special sacrifice and efforts for her benefit, because she has been so kind, generous, appreciative and true, not only to her devoted community, but also to very many others, among whom I am surely enumerated. She has been a great religious, an efficient, zealous and most devoted superior, and a true mother to very many of us."[3]

In form and feature, Mother Emma bore a striking resemblance to Blessed Mother Julie Billiart, as the Sisters of Notre Dame often remarked. Her face was a study in expression — all passing emotions were depicted there: playful humor, surprise, joy, sympathy, love, excitement, anger, pain, grief, deep concern. Her whole personality seemed revealed in her expressive countenance.

With courage and energy, Mother Emma shouldered the burden of her office. Her first care was to have the iron crucifix in the convent cemetery at Maria Stein replaced by a new one. For over thirty years the Sisters had been buried in the churchyard of St. John's parish. In 1878, a convent cemetery had been started, and had been enlarged and reconsecrated by Father Henry Drees. The weather had ruined the image on the crucifix erected in this cemetery and a new one became imperative. On November 15, 1899, a beautiful crucifix of granite was raised aloft in the center of "God's acre" and on the following Sunday was solemnly blessed by Father Henry. For many years Sisters who died at the neighboring mission houses were brought here to be buried.[4]

Mother Emma next entered whole-heartedly into the work of extending the building program inaugurated by Mother Ludovica. Urgent need for a more spacious building at the motherhouse had been felt for some time. No provision had been made for a separate novitiate, since in most cases the novices and candidates spent their time of probation in the convent where they were received, or if preparing to teach, in the Greenwood convent, where the normal school had been located since 1883. The new Rule, approved in 1889, made it incumbent upon the superiors to establish a canonical novitiate in the motherhouse at Maria Stein, where all novices and postulants could receive a thorough religious training under the direction of a duly qualified mistress.[5] A new building erected in the early nineties soon proved inadequate for the large number of candidates who were seeking admittance.

Mother Mary Emma, 1899-1905, 1911-1924

In the spring of 1901 a contract was let for a new wing to serve as a novitiate building. The plans, which were drawn up by Mr. Frank Sutter of Dayton, Ohio, called for a four-storied building of brick with a high stone foundation, extending from, and lengthening the chapel by twenty feet. Guest rooms to the front, a chaplain's suite near the chapel, and two large recreation rooms, bright and attractive, took up space on the first floor. A porch, running along the inner court as far as the chapel door, afforded a pleasant resort for spending leisure hours in the fresh air and a sheltered cloister for walks in cold or rainy weather. On the next three floors were the dormitories with curtains and counterpanes — roomy, airy, and inviting. It was an ideal place for young aspirants to the religious life, who had given up their own homes and loved ones, to heal the wounds of separation and live through the first pangs of homesickness. It was enough unlike home to help to forget, and yet pleasant enough to help to endure.[6]

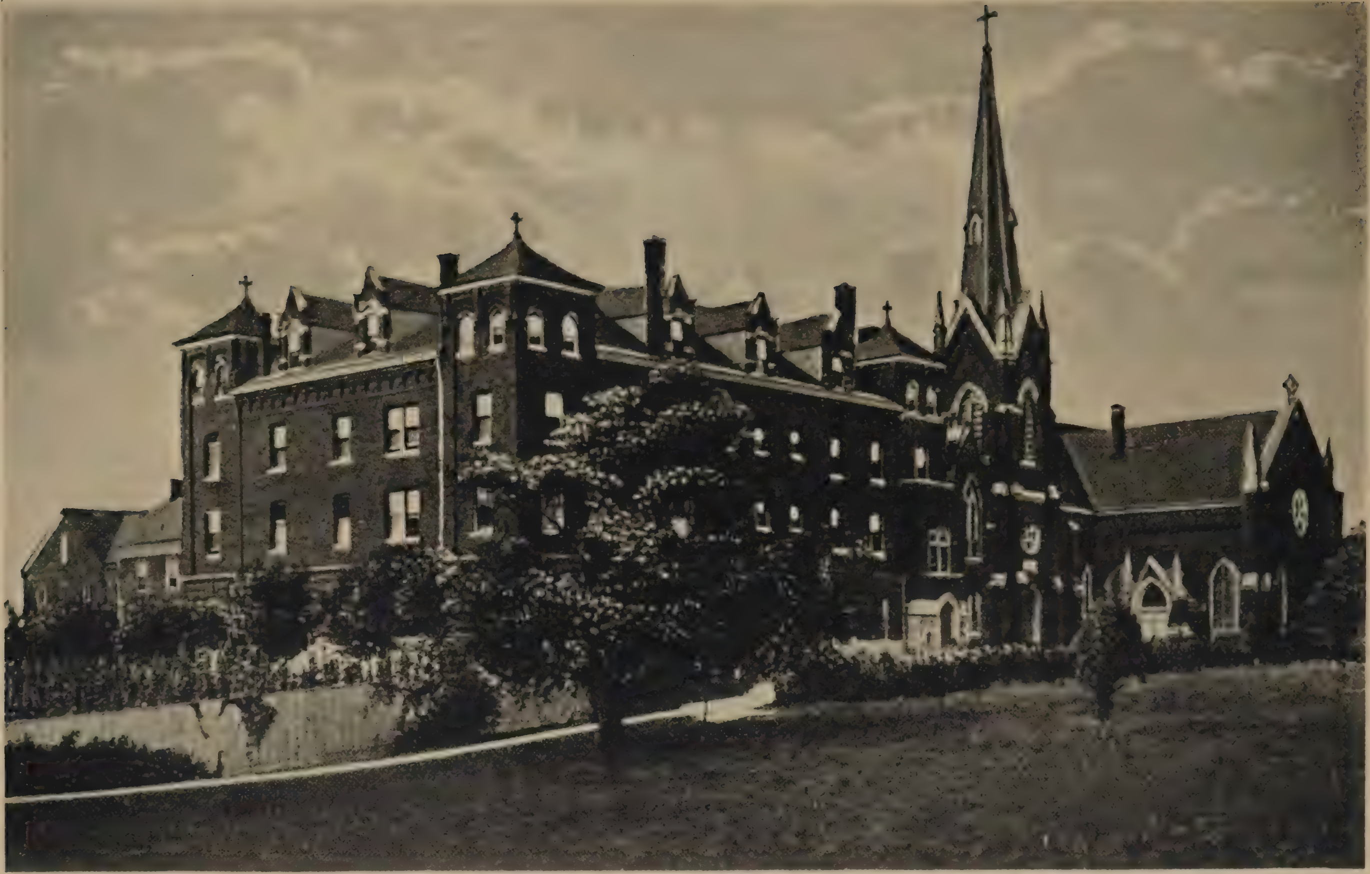
Mother Emma's venturesome spirit was soon to manifest itself by striking out for new fields of endeavor. The early history of the community is, as we have seen, a record of the toilsome labors of pioneer Sisters to establish themselves in a strange, unsettled country. They had to provide their own food and clothing by tilling large tracts of land and by raising cattle and sheep. By such humble, unobtrusive labor and by uninterrupted adoration of the Blessed Sacrament the majority sought to sanctify themselves. As time went on, however, more and more calls were made upon the Sisters to engage in external works of charity, particularly in schools and orphanages.

With a keen perception of the needs of the times, Mother Emma consented to the sale of the Mother of Mercy Convent at Himmelgarten, together with the acres of farmland surrounding it. In January, 1901, Mr. Fred Bimmel, of Portland, Indiana, purchased the property and buildings for $13,746.28. The Sisters continued to live in the convent until April, when they sorrowfully took leave of the place which had become to them in very truth "Heavengarden."[7] Before the end of that year an opportunity to erect a building elsewhere presented itself. The new institution was likewise to be dedicated to Mary, the Mother of Mercy, but with a new objective — to relieve suffering humanity.

Belief in the curative value of water was traditional in the Congregation. Father Brunner had time and again visited resorts that were famous for their mineral springs — San Bernardini in Rhaetia and Obladis in Tyrol — with the hope of obtaining a cure from a malady that had long afflicted him. A striking example of the curative effects of water was the case of Sebastian Kneipp, whose name has long been linked with water treatments and cures. A victim of tuberculosis in his student days, he was cured by water applications, douches, and especially by dives into the cold water of the Danube. After his ordination he elaborated a system of water cure which, reduced to simple terms, included early rising and retiring, water exercises, a regulated diet allowing no stimulants and little meat but prescribing an abundance of cereals. As curate at Woerishofen, Bavaria, he first practiced his system among the poor people of the parish and vicinity, but soon the rumor of his success brought him a number of rich clients, some of them royal personages.[8]

In 1895, two years before the death of the aging Monsignor, Sister Margaret Schlachter was sent by Mother Ludovica to Woerishofen to take the treatments and to study the Kneipp system. On returning to America in November of the same year, she put her knowledge into practice, and "kneipping" became quite the vogue for the Sisters even before Mother Emma ever thought of taking over the Kneipp Sanitarium.[9]

This sanitarium, located in Noble County, a short distance from Rome City, Indiana, had been erected and was managed by Doctor W. Geiermann, an enthusiastic hydrotherapeutist. Financial difficulties and other adverse circumstances rendering it impossible for the doctor to carry on the work, he was eager to see it pass into the hands of some religious community, who, he knew, would put the project on a firm basis. Upon his in-



COMMUNITY BUILDINGS COMPLETED IN 1901 AT MARIA STEIN, OHIO

vitation Mother Emma, who had been a patient at the sanitarium in the summer of 1901, accompanied by Mother Ludovica and Sister Margaret, visited the place in the late fall of the same year. They found the buildings old and dilapidated, but the location ideal for a health resort. The property, consisting of eighty acres of land rising above Sylvan Lake, was covered with wooded groves and was rich in mineral springs and small lakes. The foundation for a new building had been laid and was waiting for someone to carry it to completion.

After mature deliberation and after consulting Father Henry Drees, who highly recommended the venture, Mother Emma and her council obtained permission from Archbishop Elder to make the purchase. "The prospect of your engaging in hospital work pleases me," the archbishop wrote.[10] To establish a convent of perpetual adoration to replace the Mother of Mercy Convent at Himmelgarten, which had recently been sold; to provide an asylum for poor, sick children as well as for ailing adults; and to possess a healthful resort for infirm Sisters of the Congregation were the reasons for the purchase, as set down in the petition to the ordinary, who had asked for the exact terms on which they were going to accept the sanitarium.[11] On December 11, 1901, the Kneipp Sanitarium was acquired by the Congregation for the sum of $25,000.[12] Archbishop Elder further showed his appreciation of this new type of work which the Sisters were undertaking, in these words: "I thank you for your interesting & satisfactory account of your new establishment at Rome City, Indiana. I thank God for opening to you this great opportunity of advancing His glory & of benefiting your holy Congregation."[13]

Convinced that they who build without God build in vain, Mother Emma at once fitted out a room for a chapel so that perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament could be begun as soon as possible. On December 20, she herself made the first hour of adoration and after her the other Sisters, though few in number, took their turns. Beginning in June, when the work became increasingly heavy because of the forty to fifty patients who claimed attention, the Sisters were obliged to discontinue the night vigils for the summer, but resumed them in September on the feast of Our Lady's Nativity.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament for the entire day was first held on St. Joseph's day, exactly a year after Our Lord had been exposed for the last time in the chapel at Himmelgarten. The temporary chapel of the sanitarium received not only the name of the old Himmelgarten chapel but likewise its treasures: the picture of Our Lady of Mercy that, as tradition has it, Blessed Gaspar had used when giving missions; the head of the holy martyr, St. Rogatus; the high altar; the statues of our Blessed Mother and St. Joseph; and one of the bells for the tower.[14]

Sister Margaret Schlachter was appointed first superioress of the sanitarium. It was a happy choice, since no other Sister was better acquainted with or more interested in the Kneipp system. Sister Agreda Sperber, who was to be closely associated with the sanitarium for many years, came from her schoolroom in Nashville, Tennessee, to become the first secretary-treasurer of the new institution.[15] For two years there was no resident chaplain. Father Francis Noll, the present Bishop of Fort Wayne, came from his parish at Kendalville to minister to the spiritual needs of the Sisters and patients.[16] He was soon succeeded in both his pastorate and chaplaincy by Father John Keller, who served until the appointment in November, 1903, of a permanent chaplain, Father Alphonse Laux.[17]

In the early spring of 1902, work was begun on the main building of the new sanitarium, the original plans of which had been altered to meet the needs and purposes of the Sisters. At the same time a two-story brick house was being erected to serve as a residence for the house physician. By Christmas both buildings were ready for occupancy. On December 24, a solemn procession escorted the Blessed Sacrament to the new chapel on the second floor, the main entrance of which was reached by a staircase leading from the lobby on the first.[18] The dedication of the chapel was postponed to June 21, 1903, on which occasion Bishop Alerding, assisted by Father Henry Drees, Father John Keller, and several Precious Blood Fathers, placed the chapel, the sanitarium, and its inmates under the patronage of Mary, Mother of Mercy. Father August Seifert preached the sermon and a choir from Lima, Ohio, sang the high Mass.[19]

In the course of time additions were made to the main building and new units were erected as need required. The grounds, already noted for their natural scenic beauty, were enhanced by beds of variegated flowers, bright against a background of dark green shrubbery and neat hedgerows, by rustic bridges spanning sparkling pools and streams, by shady drives and walks leading to the Lourdes grotto[20] or to the edge of Sylvan Lake, where those in a holiday mood could revel in boating, fishing, and swimming. Later a cave representing Gethsemani with an image of Our Lord in His agony became a favorite shrine of the guests.[21] Near the entrance of the sanitarium a statue of St. Joseph was placed on guard.[22]

In 1915 the latest large addition was made to the building. During the month of May ground was broken for the erection of a beautiful new chapel with a private side chapel for the Sisters. The main chapel was large enough to accommodate not only the personnel and guests but also the cottagers who spent their summer vacation at the lake. The furnishings of the chapel were largely the gifts of generous benefactors whose names will be ever held in blessed memory. To the chapel was annexed a spacious convent where the Sisters could enjoy the privacy and seclusion so conducive to the practice of the interior life.[23]

Year by year the number of guests increased as the sanitarium became more widely known and more generally patronized. This increase was especially noticeable after the first World War, the number of guests in 1924 reaching 2350.[24] There was a decided decrease during the depression, the register showing for the year 1933 only 830 guests.[25] Many a patient who came to seek bodily health found it and went away healed of his spiritual maladies as well. A number of patients were converted to the true Faith and baptized, as the annals of the sanitarium disclose.[26] The untold good accomplished throughout the years was due in no small measure to the untiring zeal of Father Max Walz, who, appointed chaplain in 1906,[27] devoted most of his priestly life to the welfare of the institution. Then, too, the quiet influence of the Sisters and, above all, their uninterrupted prayers before the Blessed Sacrament undoubtedly obtain many graces for the souls entrusted to their care. Moreover, the religious atmosphere created by the presence of so many priest patients, the majority of whom are able to offer the Holy Sacrifice daily in the chapel (sometimes as many as forty Masses are said), has a telling effect on the spiritual life of the inmates.

Distinguished prelates often seek surcease from their strenuous duties and nerve-racking cares in the peaceful, homelike surroundings of the sanitarium, where for days that sometimes grow into weeks they enjoy the congenial companionship of their fellow clergy. Bishop Alerding, Fort Wayne, Indiana, while spending his summer vacation at his cottage on an island in Sylvan Lake, made it a custom from the year 1908 to dine daily at the sanitarium with the priests, who on some days numbered as many as forty-five.[28] Archbishop Schrembs, of Cleveland, Ohio, has for years taken a warm interest in the sanitarium, where he is still an occasional visitor. Other guests looked forward eagerly to the visits of the friendly archbishop, with whom they spent many a pleasant evening listening to his rendition of his own musical compositions or joining with him in singing familiar airs. It was Archbishop Schrembs, too, who first set on foot the lay retreat movement at the sanitarium. He was then Monsignor Schrembs, of Grand Rapids. Already in the fall of 1909 a decision was reached to hold a three days' retreat for ladies. The Monsignor had made all plans for conducting it himself, but was prevented from doing so by a head injury which he sustained in a fall while helping to decorate his church. Father Godfrey Schlachter conducted the exercises in his stead the following January.[29]

Bishop Noll, of Fort Wayne, Bishop Boyle, of Pittsburgh, and Bishop Reverman, of Superior, Wisconsin, until his recent lamented death, are names that have appeared frequently on the register among those of other eminent churchmen who come to Rome City for treatment, for rest, for vacation, or simply for a convenient stopover.

Though many of the familiar faces of Sisters who were early associated with the sanitarium have vanished, the work still goes on benefiting mankind physically and spiritually. Here the guest, while nursed back to health and refreshed in body by water douches and other forms of "kneipping," cannot help but drink in the beauty of his religion, for he finds also a goodly cup which inebriates the soul with the wine of spiritual joy. Here he has every opportunity for attendance at Holy Mass and for the daily reception of the Bread of the Strong. Here are impressive ceremonies in keeping with the liturgy, which answers every noble aspiration of the human soul. On great feasts are held devotional outdoor processions, especially inspiring in the evening, when red-shaded candles outline the slow-moving lines wending their way through leafy groves that re-echo with hymns and prayers. One of the guests who returned regularly for many years gave expression to his appreciation of this "House of Good Bread and of Rest" in the following lines:

"She looms beyond Lake Sylvan's glade
Like fortress by the sea,
A port of mercy 'neath the shade
Of heaven's spreading tree.
And girt around with shrub and pine
She lives a solitaire divine.

Within her walls the nuns with prayer
Nurse kindly sick and old,
And carry out Love's message there
For neither pence nor gold,
But pour the oil and wine of love
For mercy's sake and crown above.

Here fountains sparkling rich with health
Like time forever flow,

And magic springs of liquid wealth
In sun and shadow go.
All patients bless the founder's hand,
Who first revealed this fairyland.

The silence broods eternal here,
God's tonic for the ill,
And heaven seems a wee bit near,
Or is it Eden's thrill?
Be what it may, God keep it blest,
The fairest spot I know for rest."[30]

As long as she lived, Mother Emma took a personal interest in the development of the Kneipp Sanitarium, which she had started. But reverting to the early years of the century, we find that she had scarcely seen this new foundation struggle into existence, when she received a call from the far West. It was an urgent appeal sent from Phoenix, Arizona, in the year 1903 by Father Novatus Benzing, a Franciscan. Having been refused by sixteen different sisterhoods, he was pleading with Mother Emma to send teachers to take charge of the two schools under his pastoral care: St. Mary's for American children and St. Anthony's for Mexicans. Mother Emma, to his surprise and relief, answered his plea. In accepting a mission so far from the motherhouse, she was undoubtedly influenced by the remembrance of the neglected Indians and Mexicans whom she had met in their squalid surroundings during her trip to California several years previously. Mother Emma had fallen in love with the West, and it was this love that fired her zeal to the extent of carrying her and her little band of three over thousands of miles to the dry desert land of Arizona. Besides her traveling companion, Sister M. Victoria, there were Sister M. Philothea Dick, temporary directress, and Sister M. Lioba Rasmussen. Shortly afterward they were joined by Sister M. Annetta Schneider and Sister M. Justina Rappe, and in the late summer of 1903 by Sister M. Teresa Didier, Sister M. Sabina McEvoy, Sister M.

Approach to Main Building

Lounge

South View of Main Building

VIEWS OF KNEIPP SPRINGS, ROME CITY, INDIANA

Valentia Braun and Sister M. Hildebertha Stall, who was appointed permanent directress.[31]

At first for want of a residence the pioneers stayed with the Sisters of Mercy at St. Joseph's Hospital. Soon, however, they found quarters in two small upper rooms of St. Mary's School, where they started light housekeeping. "Here," as one account relates,

> they "roughed it" in true Western fashion, becoming acquainted with the natives, a mixture of Mexicans and Americans, and with the winged and crawling inhabitants of this section: the bats, horned toads, harmless lizards, woolly-legged tarantulas, unfriendly scorpions, varicolored centipedes, and scores of fat, agile, friendly cockroaches and ants. . . . The strange faces, the motley inhabitants, the customs and language of the natives, and the strangely warm and brilliant sunlight told but too plainly that our "Missioners" were thousands of miles from home, strangers in a strange land, and the task confronting them was to make this strange land their own — their home![32]

Father Novatus, by his unfailing kindness, and the Franciscan Brothers, by their cheerful readiness in giving aid, did much toward helping the Sisters adjust themselves to their surroundings, which daily held for them new surprises, the most alarming of which were the great sand storms.[33]

In 1904, the building on the corner of Fourth and Monroe Streets, formerly Sacred Heart Academy, was acquired from the Sisters of Mercy. The Sisters of the Precious Blood rejoiced at being able to leave their cramped quarters and enter a more spacious home, where there was sufficient room for an addition to their small community. In September, Sister M. Dafrosa Huber and Sister M. Esperanza Poll arrived to help the Phoenix missioners "bear the burden and the heat of the day."[34]

Besides the two schools in faraway Phoenix a number of other schools in Ohio and neighboring states were taken over during Mother Emma's first term of office: St. Mary's, Leipsic, Ohio (1899); St. Mary's, St. Joseph, Missouri (1899); St. Patrick's, Bellefontaine, Ohio (1901); Immaculate Conception, Fulda, Ohio, taken over for the second time (1902); the district school at Ottoville, Ohio (1902); St. Augustine's, Rensselaer, Indiana (1903); St. Bernard's, Burkettsville, Ohio (1904); St. Barbara's, Cloverdale, Ohio (1904).[35]

Owing to the great number of activities undertaken by the Sisters at this time, a dearth of vocations was keenly felt. In 1900, Mother Ludovica and Sister Margaret made another trip to Europe, returning with fifteen candidates.[36] In 1903, Sister Regis Kirschner and Sister Anselma Rufle made the trip abroad and brought back fourteen postulants.[37] The following year Mother Emma planned to make the journey to the Old World, which she had left at an early age and remembrances of which were but faint glimmerings from a far-distant past.

With Sister Margaret, a seasoned traveler who had now made the trip abroad three times, she set out from Maria Stein on October 20, 1904, intending to visit the usual places of interest to the community: old Maria Stein, Einsiedeln, Loewenberg, and the filial house on the Schellenberg. When they arrived in New York, Father Godfrey Schlachter, who was giving a mission in that city, came to see them off. He suggested that they include Rome in their itinerary and plan to be there on the occasion of the beatification of Venerable Gaspar del Bufalo, which was to take place on December 18. Father Henry Drees, to whom they wrote for advice before setting sail, gave them every encouragement, assuring them that all the other Sisters would rejoice with them at their unique privilege of representing the Congregation on this solemn occasion and of laying before their Blessed Founder its many needs.

Other persons whom they met en route at Aix-la-Chapelle, Cologne, and Freiburg endeavored to dissuade them from making the pilgrimage to Rome; only the Bishop of Chur was favorable. He urged them to be present at a solemnity that was so intimately associated with the interests of the Congregation.

Before taking the train for Rome, they made the traditional pilgrimage to Mary's shrine at Einsiedeln to obtain Our Lady's blessing upon their venture. On the evening of December 14 they were in Milan, and they reached the Eternal City the next morning. Mother Emma later tried to give expression to the feelings that stirred their innermost beings as they entered the City of the Apostles:

> About 10:30 the next morning we suddenly heard "*San Paolo fuori le mura*" and soon afterward "*Roma, Roma,*" and as we looked out of the window of our coach there, sure enough, lay the Eternal City before us. Almost immediately we were at the station . . . we were for the first time in holy Rome. We felt as though dear St. Peter looked upon us poor wayfarers as his own, and we did not feel a bit strange.[38]

They were warmly welcomed at Holy Cross Hospital on the Via San Basilia, where they had been directed by the Reverend Mother of the Sisters in charge, whose motherhouse is in Ingenbohl. That same afternoon they visited St. Peter's and knelt for the first time at the crypt of the Prince of the Apostles. Quite providentially they happened to be present for the solemn close of the golden jubilee celebration in honor of the Immaculate Conception, it being the octave of the feast. Mother Emma saw in the crowd of worshipers from every race, nation, and class, that thronged the great basilica, "a true picture of the Church Militant."

On their return to the hospital, Father Joseph Schaeper, Procurator General of the Congregation in Rome, an American and a distant relative of Mother Emma, was there to welcome them. It was through his kind offices that they obtained tickets for reserved seats in St. Peter's for the ceremony of beatification, which was to take place the following Sunday morning.

Meanwhile, they allowed no moment of the two intervening days to be lost. Under the trusty guidance of Peter Rieder, a sturdy Swiss whom the superioress of the hospital loaned them for the extent of their two weeks' stay in Rome, they visited several places of interest: the church of Santa Maria in Trivio, where the relics of Blessed Gaspar are preserved; the catacombs of St. Calixtus on the Appian Way, where Mother Emma relived the times of the early Christians which she had read about in Wiseman's *Fabiola;* the Vatican gardens, where the famous Lourdes grotto was then in the process of construction; on Saturday afternoon the churches of Santa Maria in Trastevere, of Santa Cecilia, of St. Alexius, of Santa Sabina, and finally the monastery of St. Dominic.[39]

At length came the day so long anticipated. It is worthwhile to let Mother Emma herself recount this great event.

> Father Schaeper had taken care of our tickets for reserved seats and the good superioress of Holy Cross Hospital saw to it that we reached St. Peter's early in order to avoid the crowds. We were among the first to arrive and hence could get to our places without much difficulty. It was a little after seven o'clock, and the celebration was to begin at nine-thirty. Since our seats were somewhat elevated, we could view the crowds as they came streaming in. We were in the large gallery in front of the altar near the place where, over St. Peter's chair, the picture of the Blessed hung veiled. Next to the altar were the Fathers of the Precious Blood and about one hundred-fifty Sisters of the Precious Blood from Rome and Italy, also several from Bosnia. Through the kindness of Father Schaeper we obtained places in the first row, where we could plainly see and observe everything that was going on. Directly before us in the aisle through the middle of the gallery, which was closed off, we saw cardinals, prelates, and other clergy in their different garbs.
>
> In great suspense we awaited the opening of the ceremony, which began at 9:30 with the reading of the decree, that lasted for about a half hour. When the reading was finished and the lector had descended from the tribune, there was complete silence for about a minute; then a gentle rustle, and at the same moment the curtain fell from the pic-

ture, from which radiated brilliant beams formed by thousands of electric lights. It was a most solemn moment, in which the Church Triumphant in heaven seemed to have come down to the Church Militant on earth. The Blessed stood before us as though in reality he were beckoning to us from the open gates of heaven: "Follow after me." Oh, yes, at that moment it certainly would not have been difficult to follow him, even though the price would have been great self-conquest and humiliations. I only wish that all the dear Sisters in America could have seen that picture. Even today I can scarcely realize that it was only a picture. Ah, but that was Rome! St. Peter's! The center of Christendom! It was not mere fantasy; it was all actuality.

There was silence for a few minutes; then the organ began to play and a solemn *Te Deum* was chanted. . . . There was again a marked stillness; then the celebrant, Bishop Palmiera [*sic;* Archbishop Palmieri], intoned with a trembling voice for the first time: *"Ora pro nobis, Beate Gaspare,"* and it was as though the whole Militant Church responded: *"Ut digni efficiamur promissionibus Christi."* Surely the dear Blessed was at that solemn moment praying also for our poor little Congregation in America. Oh, if he would only obtain for all of us the grace to be humble of heart; to practice adoration and the offering of the Precious Blood in the Blessed Sacrament with devotion, love, and perseverance — and in imitation of his example that most necessary virtue, zeal for souls. Without these could we really call ourselves his children?

Then a solemn high Mass began — it seemed that never before was a high Mass so short as on that memorable day, December 18, 1904.

It was after 12:30 when we returned to Holy Cross Hospital. The superioress heartily congratulated us, and her first question was, "Well, what do you think of such a celebration?" We exclaimed, "Oh, it is really not so hard to be a saint; one need only be humble." She clasped her hands and said, "Yes, but that is exactly what is so dreadfully hard for us." She understood — it is indeed the truth.[40]

That afternoon Mother Emma and Sister Margaret had the rare privilege of seeing the Holy Father, Pius X, at close range — so close, indeed, that they could observe the movements of his eyes and hands. He was present for the solemn Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, which closed the day's festivities. After the blessing, the Fathers of the Precious Blood presented Pius X with a richly encased relic of Blessed Gaspar together with a beautiful bouquet of fresh flowers, which he received with a smile. Then he descended from his throne and was borne back to the Vatican.

"And so," Mother Emma concluded, "the day was almost at an end, and as the crowds streamed out and we too had to leave St. Peter's, since the churches in Rome are closed early, we looked up once more to the glorious picture of the Blessed and the thought came to me, 'Ah, this great day which we have so long anticipated and awaited is now past!' The dear Blessed could have indeed rejoined, 'But my joy is always new and will never, never pass — not for all eternity.' God grant that we also may be able to say that soon."[41]

Father Schaeper had invited the two American Sisters to be present at the audience which the Holy Father was granting the Fathers and Sisters of the Precious Blood the following afternoon. With great joy and expectation, Mother Emma awaited the hour when she could kneel at the feet and look up into the face of Christ's Vicar on earth. At two o'clock they were at the Vatican and were soon ushered into the audience chamber, where already thirty Precious Blood Sisters of the Roman Congregation had assembled. As they were all kneeling in a semicircle, tense with emotion, the door opened and the Holy Father entered accompanied by two prelates. His face lit up with a smile, and as he stood in their midst, he stretched out both arms in a gesture of welcome. Then he spoke in Italian for a few minutes, after which he extended his hand to each Sister to kiss. Once more his penetrating eyes swept the semicircle of faces; then he turned to leave. As he reached the doorway, he looked back and made a remark which caused all who could understand it, even his solemn-faced attendants, to smile. The cause of the merriment Mother Emma was to learn later. The Holy Father in his first remarks had exhorted the nuns to pray for new miracles that would insure the canonization of Blessed Gaspar, and as an afterthought added when he reached the door, "But don't forget to pray for such miracles that one can plainly see with both eyes."[42]

Upon Mother Emma especially, the incidents of those two unforgettable days made a lasting impression. Years later she loved to recall and would relate with minutest detail in her inimitable way what she considered the two outstanding events of her life — the beatification of Blessed Gaspar and her audience with Pius X.

After the celebration, Mother Emma and Sister Margaret did not hurry away from Rome, but spent ten more days visiting the many places of interest that lure thousands of pilgrims annually to the heart of Christendom. As they made the visits to the seven churches to gain the indulgence, they doubtless thought of Mother Brunner, who had made these visits over and over again during her nine months' stay in Rome seventy-one years before. On Christmas Eve they went to the church of Santa Maria Maggiori, where a large relic of the crib of Bethlehem, exposed for veneration, attracted crowds of worshipers and sightseers. The next day they were privileged to kneel directly before the relic during the high Mass offered on an altar above which, in place of a cross, stood a charming, golden figure of the Christ-child, with arms extended in the form of a cross.[43]

December 28, the anniversary of the death of Blessed Gaspar, found them once more at the altar in Santa Maria in Trivio, where the relics of the venerated founder are preserved. There they received the blessing of the Moderator General, Very Reverend Luigi Biaschelli, and bade farewell to him and Father Schaeper. That same afternoon they were on their way back to Schellenberg, traveling through Florence, Mantua, Verona, Trent, Bozen, Brixen, Innsbruck, and Feldkirch.[44]

During the last three weeks of their stay in Europe, the two Sisters paid a visit to the cradle of the Congregation, castle Loewenberg. In the church of St. Mary at Sagens, where the remains of Mother Brunner lay at rest under the altar steps, they found, to their disappointment, the marble slab, which had been erected to her memory five years before by Mother Ludovica, stowed in the back of the church, giving no indication of the exact spot of the foundress' crypt.[45] But Providence needed no inscription on marble to bring to light the hidden things He wished revealed. In His own good time He would show what splendor there is in the dust of His saints.

Mother Emma and Sister Margaret returned to America in April, 1905, bringing with them twenty candidates. During their absence Archbishop Elder, who had always shown himself a kind and devoted father to the Sisters, had passed to his reward. His last letter to the community had been a belated New Year's letter in which he had written significantly:

> I began writing to you before the New Year. And I have no sufficient excuse for not finishing my letter. I can only throw myself on your good will and indulgence. And even now I will be very brief. Eyes are dull, fingers are stiff, and the brain is getting indolent under the weight of years. So I only assure you that I remember you in Holy Mass: giving thanks to God for blessing the diocese with so many zealous communities of the "Devout Female Sex": and praying for His continued favors to all & each of you. Pray for me.[46]

"Yes," runs the comment on his death in the community chronicle, "in our faithful old archbishop we have lost a loving father, a solicitous chief shepherd, who, great and noble as he appeared before men, was still greater in the eyes of God. May he rest in peace."[47] That summer his successor, Archbishop Henry Moeller, presided at the elections at the motherhouse which resulted in the choice of Sister Josephine Boetsch as the new Mother General.[48]

Chapter IV

THE BURDEN OF GOVERNMENT FALLS ON MOTHER JOSEPHINE

AS GOD in His infinite wisdom saw fit to create a diversity of characters in the persons of the saints, whom He has raised up in the Church to serve as models for their fellow-men and to leave their peculiar impress upon their times, so does He often permit a wide range in types of personalities and temperaments among His representatives in the persons of religious superiors. "It appears," remarks Father Raoul Plus, S. J., "that Providence does not like uniformity. Infinite diversity in His natural and supernatural creation is one of His riches. There are not two souls alike, nor two saints."[1]

The newly elected Mother Josephine was a marked contrast to Mother Emma. Whereas Mother Emma was naturally endowed with the qualities of a leader, Mother Josephine, timid, quiet, and withdrawn, was happy to be lost in the rank and file of religious and to pass her life unnoticed and unknown. She would have preferred her little country schoolroom to the office that would necessarily bring her into the limelight, and she earnestly sought to evade the honors and responsibilities of the generalship, which in her humility she sincerely believed herself incapable of assuming. When she was finally convinced, however, of the will of God in the outcome of the elections of August 9, 1905, she humbly resigned herself to His providence.

She was consoled in having as her immediate assistants the two ex-Mothers. Their ripe experience and wise counsel would serve her in her appointed task. The other officers elected to assist her were: Sister Cecilia Lang, secretary general; Sister Mansuetta Graf, treasurer general; and Sister Victoria Drees, directress of schools. Sister Regula Dann, who had been appointed to succeed Sister Margaret as mistress of novices shortly after the latter's election in 1899 to the office of secretary general, was officially reinstated in that charge.[2]

Two days after the elections, Archbishop Moeller presided at the solemn ceremony of investment and profession of vows. It was the first time in the annals of the Congregation that the ordinary was present for such an occasion. Those who approached the altar were especially impressed by the dignity and solemnity which his presence added to the ceremonies. In a brief and inspiring address he exhorted the Sisters to lay aside the garment of worldly piety and clothe themselves with the true religious spirit. Then he clearly pointed out the distinction between mere worldly piety, which seeks to carry out its own notions of spirituality, and the true religious spirit, which subjects the will to the divine plan in the minutest details of daily life. He concluded with the words: "Therefore, dear Sisters, do not allow the ceremonies of this day to be an empty formality, like a nut without a kernel, but try to comprehend the real meaning of your vocation and enter the religious life with the fervor of the religious spirit. Then you can say in truth: 'I have laid aside my old garment, and how should I put on the new?' "[3]

The words of the archbishop seem to indicate the role of Mother Josephine as head of the Congregation. While she did not concern herself greatly about embellishing the community exteriorly by erecting imposing buildings, nor exert herself to add to its prestige by entering new fields of endeavor, she earnestly strove to imbue the Sisters with a deep religious spirit. One letter will suffice to show her desire that the Sisters be truly spiritual-minded:

> I hope that the dear Christ-child has bestowed upon you in rich measure all kinds of good gifts, but especially His heavenly treasures of grace, which He so willingly imparts to us if only our heart is well disposed and our perverse will does not place any obstacle in the way.
>
> For the New Year I wish you the gifts of the three holy Kings. In the first place, a large lump of gold, that is, a very

Mother Mary Josephine, 1905-1911

great love of God and of neighbor which seeks God alone in everything and is ambitious for nothing else but to please your Beloved, and which, by fixing your gaze on Him, turns it aside from the weaknesses and failings of others and does not allow your peace of heart to be disturbed by their actions and omissions.

Secondly, I wish you 365 pounds of the finest incense, that is, for every day of the year the greatest possible fervor in prayer — not mere lip service, but genuine, interior, heartfelt prayer that like sweet-smelling incense rises to heaven and draws down the blessing of God upon all of us, as also upon the whole community, upon poor sinners, and upon the poor souls in purgatory.

Thirdly, I wish you just as many bunches of myrrh. These are never wanting to us. We have ample opportunity to gather ten to a hundred daily and lay them at the feet of Jesus; for who does not have his little crosses, his occasions for overcoming self, his weaknesses, his struggles and temptations of every sort? Oh, if we would only accept and bear them in a true spirit of sacrifice! How much joy could we thereby afford the Sacred Heart of Jesus and what rich reward could we expect in eternity! God grant it![4]

Having taught school herself for many years,[5] Mother Josephine was naturally interested in the welfare of the schools entrusted to her community, and was also concerned about the comfort and conveniences of the mission homes of the teaching Sisters. She knew from experience that a pleasant and congenial home to which the teachers could retire after the nerve-racking cares of a busy school day contributed not a little to their mental and physical well-being.

Mary's Home had been erected (1894) near St. Joseph's Orphanage in Dayton, for the Sisters at St. Mary's School, but was too far distant from the school and too small to accommodate the growing staff of teachers. During the first year of her term of office Mother Josephine consented to the sale of the house on the hill and the letting of contracts for a larger residence to be built on Xenia Avenue. The new Mary's Home, which, as Father Kemper, the pastor of St. Mary's remarked, "presented a very conventlike appearance," was completed in December, 1906, and was dedicated to Our Lady on the octave of her Immaculate Conception.[6] Here the Sisters have always enjoyed their own private chapel, where they can gather strength from the Eucharistic Presence to enter daily the battle for souls.

In the fall of 1906, the Sisters opened another city school in connection with the new St. Mark's Church, which the Fathers of the Precious Blood had recently erected in Cincinnati. The church was dedicated by Archbishop Moeller as Cincinnati's forty-sixth Catholic church, on October 28. The first floor was devoted to classrooms and apartments for the three teachers,[7] Sister Innocentia Verbillet, Sister Isabelle Missler, and later in the year, Sister Colette Madigan. The Sisters had already purchased a lot near the church, where they intended to build their own mission house in this flourishing parish in order to become permanently established in Cincinnati.[8] But it was two years before their plan could be realized. Meanwhile they moved from their quarters in the school building, which were converted into needed classrooms, to a private residence on Montgomery Road. On August 5, 1908, ground was broken for their new home and chapel and on the following March 27 the completed building was dedicated under the beautiful title of Our Lady of Grace. "This commodious and pleasant home" is another monument to Mother Josephine's maternal care and solicitude for the mission Sisters.

From the beginning the blessing of God rested on the work of the Sisters at St. Mark's School. The enrollment increased so rapidly that within a few years several schoolrooms had to be added. Excellence of scholarship kept pace with steady growth. An exhibition of the work of the children at the close of the school year in 1909 received the following comments in the columns of the *Catholic Telegraph:*

> During the past week the class work of the school children has been on exhibition, and in view of the fact that

> St. Mark's is one of the youngest of our parochial schools the exhibit was praiseworthy. Nine Palmer certificates for penmanship were awarded in the seventh and eighth grades, and two in the sixth grade, while some map-drawings presented so exact an appearance that at first glance they might pass for prints. The little girls, as well as the private pupils of the Sisters' Mission House, had their needlework on exhibition. The display of the various grades is a satisfactory guarantee to the most critical that St. Mark's School is abreast of the times. When the beginning is so promising, the success of the future is assured. These schools are in charge of the Sisters of the Precious Blood, recognized everywhere as capable and zealous teachers.[9]

St. Mark's School has in the course of years made good that assurance of its future success, for today, it is considered one of the outstanding grade schools of Cincinnati. The untiring labors and harassing difficulties encountered by Father Mark Hamburger, the devoted pastor of St. Mark's for more than twenty-five years, and his corps of efficient workers — assistants and teachers who stood by him through thick and thin — have brought creditable results.

Another school, which was eventually to reach the highest enrollment of all the schools taught by the Sisters of the Precious Blood, threw open its doors to a motley group of some 150 boys and girls of various nationalities on September 10, 1908, in Cleveland. Toward the end of the summer, Father Luke Rath, pastor of Our Lady of Good Counsel Church, had sent a telegram to Maria Stein appealing for teachers for the new school and requesting an immediate reply. Mother Josephine was away from the motherhouse and could not be readily contacted. Sister Victoria and other members of the council, believing Mother Josephine would favor the project, sent word to Father Luke that they would accept the school. But Mother Josephine, hearing of the action they had taken, was displeased. She did not recall the promise that they had made in her name, but required that they procure the six Sisters needed for the mission. This was not an easy task, since all the appointments had been made for the year. However, Sister Gebharda Spitznagel, who had been relieved from duty in Phoenix because of ill health, Sister Genevieve Koselke, Sister Benita Sielemann, a newly professed Sister, and Sister Marietta Hoberg, a novice, with Sister Julia Duerler as housekeeper and Sister Oswalda Hoege as directress, were chosen to go to Cleveland. Sister Victoria accompanied them, remaining there until they were settled in their new home and all business matters had been satisfactorily arranged with Father Luke and the higher authorities.[10]

Besides these two city schools, the district school at Russia, Ohio (1909),[11] was the only grade school to come under the Sisters' supervision during Mother Josephine's generalship. At Wapakoneta, Ohio, a high school was started in the fall of 1908 with Sister Menedora McNally as the first teacher. In the same year schools at Templeton, Iowa, and at Germantown, Missouri, were given up.[12]

Meanwhile the new mission in faraway Phoenix was making rapid progress. It was no secret that Mother Emma had heart and soul in this western mission. In 1905, having been relieved of her duties as Superior General, she directed affairs at the Kneipp Sanitarium for a year. But her failing health sent her west in the fall of 1906 to take charge of the mission in Phoenix, where she met with a joyous reception. Her presence seemed to lessen the distance from the motherhouse, making the Phoenix missioners feel nearer home.[13]

With her usual spirit of enterprise Mother Emma began to make necessary improvements in the Sisters' convent. One of her first moves was to provide a room for a private chapel so that the Sisters could draw strength and comfort from having the Divine Guest tabernacled under the same roof with them. Renovations were made in both the interior and exterior of the building to serve better the needs of the Sisters as well as those of the children who from the beginning had been boarded at the convent.[14]

Mother Emma's sense of humor was as keen as her powers

St. Mary's Mission House, Dayton, Ohio

St. Mark's Mission House, Cincinnati, Ohio

of observation, and she was ever ready to join in the general merriment created by a ludicrous situation. "You ask," she wrote in answer to a letter from the East, "what we are doing here in the West. I wish you could come upon us unawares now and then when we are all busy at work. Funny things happen every once in a while, not only to the Mexicans and orphans, but also to ourselves here in the house."[15]

One humorous instance the Sisters especially enjoy relating. It happened not among the Mexicans but among the Catholic Indians at the Government Reservation School, where the Sisters had been giving religious instructions from the very first year of their arrival — "an almost hopeless task." One of the Sisters was trying to impress upon the minds of the little Indians the truth that God made everything. To drive home this important lesson, she had recourse to numerous illustrations: people, birds, flowers, fruits, sun, moon, stars, etc. Finally she called upon one of the boys, to discover how much he had comprehended of this fundamental truth. To all her questions the lad unfailingly gave the correct answer until she asked: "Who made me?" The little Indian was nonplused. Surely a master builder made Sister! As he hesitated another child shouted, "St. Joseph!" After class Sister confided to her companion: "I always knew I was a blockhead, but I didn't think the Indians were keen enough to surmise that it took a carpenter to make me."[16]

Sometimes the Sisters were invited to visit St. John's Indian Mission, which is in charge of the Franciscan Fathers and the St. Joseph Sisters. Though it is only eighteen miles out in the desert, the trip thither and back, which now is made in less than two hours, then required two days. Mother Emma has left a vivid account in one of her letters of a visit that she and several other Sisters made on Christmas Day of 1908. After describing the ever inspiring ceremonies of midnight Mass and the Christmas morning services held at home, she continued:

> By that time it was noon, and before we had quite finished dinner, an old Indian came to tell us that he was

> to bring us out to the Indian mission in the desert; the missionary and Sisters wished us to be present at their Christmas-tree celebration. Sister Hildebertha, Sister Hortensia, and I went with him eighteen miles out into the desert. Salt River, which we had to cross, was so swollen that for its mile's breadth we had to drive against a strong current with the water up to the hub of the wheels, but our good guardian angel was with us and everything went well; and our old Indian was so sure that we were not at all afraid. Besides, the good old redskin could not speak a word of English; however, when we had to drive near some bushes, he drew our attention to the fact each time by an energetic hemming and hawing, so that the branches would not strike us in the face as they rebounded.
>
> We arrived there safely, and the Indian children as well as the Sisters and the missionary welcomed us with great joy. We enjoyed their simple celebration very much. The poor Indian children (about 200) were quite contented with their Christmas tree, and yet each one received only a handful of nuts and candy and a few marbles or some other trifle. We remained until Sunday afternoon, when the missionary himself brought us home. I wish you could spend a few days just once at such a mission in the desert; one feels a good deal nearer heaven and learns besides many a lesson about the real spirit of sacrifice and self-denial out of love and zeal for souls.[17]

During the five years that Mother Emma spent in the West, she put into practice "many a lesson" she had learned and her love and zeal for souls deepened with the passing years. Recalled to the motherhouse in 1911 to resume the office of Superior General, she never lost interest in the western missions. On the contrary, she made use of her authority to extend the missionary activities of the Sisters still farther west, to the very shores of the Pacific.

Doubtless the main reason for the comparatively small number of schools taken over between 1904 and 1908 was the dearth of Sisters who were prepared to teach. The majority of candidates were still recruited from abroad,[18] and while some of these were talented and later became efficient teachers, they were at first handicapped because of their lack of knowledge of the English language. Their time of training was necessarily prolonged. As a result, the annals of the normal school show an average of only four or five new teachers sent out each year to the missions,[19] and these were needed as additional teachers in overcrowded schools or as substitutes for old or infirm Sisters who were no longer able to teach.

After Sister Cecilia had been appointed directress of schools in the elections of 1899, the normal training school at the motherhouse was entrusted to Sister Victoria, who retained the position even after she herself was chosen directress in 1905.[20] Endowed with a fine intellect and imbued with a deeply religious spirit, Sister Victoria left her impress upon the young Sisters and made every effort to fit them for their noble profession of teaching. Few will forget her heart-to-heart talks with them, which revealed so well her own gentleness and refinement of character — qualities that tempered her somewhat strict and ascetic nature. That the young teachers were thoroughly grounded in subject matter as well as in the theory and practice of teaching is shown by the number who, engaged to teach in the public schools, successfully passed the county examinations and received county certificates.

For the improvement of the teachers, summer institutes of two weeks were held, with few exceptions, from 1893 to 1911. During these institutes lively discussions on particular phases of teaching were often held, lectures by priests or by visiting instructors were sometimes given, and instruction in the higher branches was imparted, all with a view to keeping alive in the teachers a professional attitude toward their work in the classroom and to fostering the desire for intellectual growth.[21]

These gatherings were more like teachers' meetings than summer school sessions and were truly beneficial both physically and mentally. There was no mad rush for credits and no consequent strain on the nerves through an endeavor to crowd into the space of a few short weeks all the courses possible. The atmosphere was one of scholarly leisure and mutual helpfulness. There was time for calm discussion of teaching problems actually met with in the field and for their satisfactory solution by veterans with varied experience. The short duration of the institute afforded the teachers ample time to refresh themselves in body by useful manual occupations and to renew themselves in spirit by the annual retreat, before they returned to the arduous ten months' grind of the classroom.

In the summer of 1907 Archbishop Moeller opened the institute with an inspiring address in which he expressed his thanks to the teaching Sisters for their co-operation with him and his priests in the education of children, "who are to be the future glory of the Church." During the last three days of this institute Father Auer, who had recently been named diocesan superintendent of schools for Cincinnati, conducted a series of lectures on educational topics in which he exhorted the Sisters to make every effort to meet the required standards of professional training for teachers.[22] His stimulating talks sounded the death knell of the annual summer institute. In a few years the Sisters would be feverishly struggling for college credits in summer school.

A familiar and friendly figure at these old-time institutes was good old Father Henry. He had been chaplain at the motherhouse and spiritual father of the community since the summer of 1899, soon after his release from the duties of provincial. "Come to Maria Stein," Mother Ludovica had said to him by way of invitation. "You can live there for a few short years yet."[23] The "few short years" lengthened into ten long years, during which he so endeared himself to the Sisters by his genial humor, his paternal kindness, and genuine saintliness, that they thought they could never find another to replace him.

Besides his regular duties as chaplain, Father Henry gave catechism instructions to the novices and postulants throughout the year as well as lectures and conferences to the teachers

THE VERY REVEREND HENRY DREES
Fourth Provincial, 1880-1898

during the summer. But his interest in the schools and the mission Sisters was not limited to a few weeks in summer. Through his actual visits and his wide correspondence he kept in touch with the Sisters of the various houses,[24] informing them of news at the motherhouse, delighting them with his sparkling flashes of wit, and encouraging them by his wise counsels. His letters give ample proof that he was more than a spiritual director; he was a father in the full sense of the word.

Referring to his Sunday catechism class, he once wrote: "This afternoon, it being extremely hot, I made a move to throw up books and strike. But they would not strike; and hence we went to work. When I asked them: *'Wie thut ihr denn schwitzen?'* they answered: *'Gott zu lieb!'* No doubt you sweat in the same spirit."[25]

On another occasion he appended the following facetious postscript to a letter written in a light, humorous vein from start to finish:

> There are now in Maria Stein — say, some one hundred Sisters. Lots of novices and candidates. What puzzles me is how their mouths are kept agoing: 100 for breakfast; 100 for dinner; 100 for supper — not to mention lunch. And then there is P. Henry to feed — a big eater! I stick to the medicine Dr. Stephenson prescribed for me, years ago. It was in Carthagena, toward evening, when the Dr. visited some sick I asked Mr. Stephenson to feel my pulse [and prescribe] what medicine I would need. In a very doctor-like, scientific manner, he felt my pulse, saying in a professional style: "I prescribe a good, hearty supper." I took the medicine.[26]

Father Henry was always deeply grateful for the least marks of attention shown him by the Sisters. To a letter conveying their New Year's greetings he responded: "I appreciate those wishes of our Sisters, knowing they come *ex corde* [from the heart] and are not mere wishes, but are sustained and made effective by many prayers. Many thanks and *Vergelt's Gott!*"[27] Again in answer to a name-day remembrance: "Why! if the Lord grants all you wish me, there is no chance left for others to get between. Well! I know your sentiments and return my sincere thanks, and many, many [times] *Vergelt's Gott!* for your good wishes and prayers in my behalf." In the same letter, to acknowledge the thoughtful little gift of a box of Nabiscos: "Taking a bite of same, I remember you. Even without Nabiscos I remember you every day in my prayers."[28]

Though the passing years engraved deep furrows on Father Henry's brow and turned his greying hair to white, age failed to rob him of his youthful zest and light-hearted gayety. There was always a merry twinkle in his eye, a ready smile on his face, and jovial words on his lips, bespeaking a soul at peace with God and men. And well might he enjoy imperturbable peace of soul, for he was completely abandoned to the will of his Creator. "As God wills" was his watchword. As he neared his goal his warmth of disposition and mildness of character became, if anything, more evident. It has been said of him, "His last days resembled a quiet, cloudless autumn evening when the sun with its mild rays once more heightens the beauty of the landscape before it sinks and disappears behind the horizon."[29]

Almost to the last Father Henry kept to his post of duty. On September 29, 1909, he suffered a noticeable relapse into a sickness from which he had recovered the previous summer. In spite of his fever he somehow managed to offer the Holy Sacrifice once more on October 2, the feast of the Guardian Angels. The almost superhuman effort he put forth to do so cost him dearly, for he became so ill that the Last Sacraments were administered to him before noon. He rallied once more, however, fully resigned to whatever Providence had in store for him. Two days before the end came, mustering up his failing powers, he imparted his final blessing to all the Sisters of the Precious Blood, far and near, in the following touching words:

> My beloved Children! Sisters!
>
> We have always lived genially together, and you have done so much for me. May the loving Triune God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, bless all of you now to the glory of God and to your sanctification. This is probably the last blessing for soul and body that I will give you. May the dear God grant you all good and preserve you from all evil, also from sickness.
>
> Through the Precious Blood of Jesus may the blessing of God remain with you, children, that you may live in peace with one another, now and always, through the intercession of the Blessed Mother of God. May our dear Mother help you; may also St. Joseph, St. Francis Xavier, St. Francis de Sales, the blessed founder, and all the saints, intercede for you through the Precious Blood of Jesus. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.[30]

Having made the sign of the cross three times, he motioned those in the room to come closer as he said: "Now I can say no more to you. A person can't tell how this will turn out — as long as there is life there is hope. When you pray for me, pray that God's will may be done in Father Henry. Now go in God's name. Praised be Jesus Christ!"

The end came rather suddenly on the morning of October 10, a half-hour after he had received Holy Communion. In death as in life he was a shining example of all the virtues he had so earnestly endeavored to inculcate in others: perfect resignation, childlike confidence, self-effacing humility, unremitting prayer — all proclaimed the passing of a saint.

Father Boniface Russ, the provincial, delivered the funeral address after a solemn Requiem in the Sisters' chapel on October 12, before the remains were taken to Carthagena for burial.[31] He pointed to the indefatigable labors of the zealous apostle and put into his mouth the words of St. Paul: "I have labored more than all the rest."[32] Father Henry would never have dreamed of expressing such a sentiment, even if St. Paul did, but the words were nevertheless applicable. He wore himself out for others. Truly his death was a great loss to the Congregation in general and to the Sisters at Maria Stein in particular. There could never be another Father Henry.

On the following Easter, 1910, the community sustained another great loss in the death of an invaluable member, Sister Margaret Schlachter. After a serious operation a year earlier, she was in such a critical condition that the doctor declared her case hopeless unless she were operated on again. Holy Thursday eve found her still active as superior of the Kneipp Sanitarium. While busy overseeing the erection of a beautiful crucifixion group that had been donated by Dr. Bernard Pulskamp, the house physician, she was summoned to meet her missionary brother, Father Godfrey Schlachter, who appeared unusually perturbed. He had come to urge her to submit to the operation, which three days later proved fatal.[33]

Sister Margaret is remembered by the older Sisters, whose novice mistress she had been, as a person of quiet dignity and calm determination, but withal of a motherly disposition. During her eight years' superiorship at the sanitarium she won the esteem of doctors, patients, and all who came in contact with her. Her presence of mind in an emergency and her utter reliability at all times especially fitted her for her position. Her passing removed one of the foundation stones of the community.

The rest of the year 1910 was quite uneventful except for another trip to Europe, this time by Sister Regula and Sister Oswalda, and a visitation tour of the western missions by Mother Josephine.[34]

In 1911, toward the end of her term of office, Mother Josephine began a building project which was left for her successor to complete. The old convent of the Visitation at Minster, Ohio, which had been standing since 1858, was falling into such a state of dilapidation that it would have been unwise to try to renovate it. Mother Josephine and her council decided, therefore, to tear down the chapel and the Sisters' living apartments completely, leaving only the children's house, a much newer structure, and the laundry building.

There is always something sad about the demolition of a house which has harbored human life so long and has witnessed so many joys and sorrows and struggles. This is doubly true of a convent, a house of God, where the halls have re-echoed for years the countless footsteps of the brides of Christ, bent on fulfilling some task of obedience or making an hour of adoration before the tabernacle. It was this thought that gave eloquence to the words of Father Eugene Grimm, at that time pastor at Minster, when after the celebration of the last Holy Mass in the old chapel on February 15, 1911, he spoke of the sacredness of the building about to be razed. He recalled to the minds of his hearers the many Holy Masses that had been offered, Benedictions imparted, confessions heard, and sermons and retreats held in that hallowed spot, and the consequent showers of graces that had been continuously poured down from on high. He vividly pictured saintly Father Kunkler standing there time and again preaching the word of God with true apostolic zeal. He recalled the countless prayers sent up to heaven day and night by the brides of Christ. But all this good was not to end with the destruction of the building, because a more worthy temple was to be raised aloft to replace it. What a theme for thanksgiving!

After the solemn *Te Deum,* a procession was formed and the Blessed Sacrament was carried to a large classroom in St. Mary's Institute, which had been fitted out to serve temporarily as a chapel. Mother Josephine claimed the privilege of making the first hour of adoration in this improvised oratory. That same day the work of dismantling the old convent was begun, and a few days later the crash of the walls as they fell amid a cloud of dust and mortar gave evidence that the work was progressing in good earnest.

Plans for the new convent called for a building of three floors and a basement, with a large chapel extending to the height of the second and third stories. Ample space was provided for simple but comfortable living quarters for the Sisters. With an eye for thrift the superiors included in the contract the use of as much of the old brick as possible for lining the walls of the interior.

Toward the end of the following November the Sisters took up their abode in their fine new home, which was dedicated to Our Lady by Archbishop Moeller on December 22, 1911, under a new title, the Annunciation. But by that time Mother Josephine was no longer Superior General.[35]

During her term of office she had succeeded, despite her diffidence, in winning the affection and esteem of her Sisters. It is noteworthy that in the chapter of 1911 she received the second highest number of votes. From the beginning of her term she had felt herself unequal to the task before her, but she had leaned on God for support and from Him had drawn the strength she needed to fulfill worthily her manifold duties. Since the elections of August 8, 1911,[36] signified that He no longer required of her the stewardship over the whole Congregation, she joyfully shifted her burden to the shoulders of Mother Emma, who, with renewed energy after her prolonged "vacation" in the West, humbly accepted it and gallantly set forth in quest of new adventures.

Chapter V

MOTHER EMMA CARRIES ON: EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS

COULD Mother Emma, on resuming the office of Superior General, have lifted the veil of the future and viewed the events of the next ten years, she might well have been dismayed at the outset. Directly ahead was the historic Dayton flood of 1913. It would involve no casualties among the Sisters — only great inconveniences — but it would sadly mar the beauty of the "Gem City," on which she had already set her heart and about which she was dreaming strange dreams. In the offing towered the impending waves of the great World War, which would eventually catch up in its swirl relatives of Sisters, who would be fighting on both sides in the struggle; and when children's hearts grieve, so does the mother's heart. In the wake of the war stalked the influenza epidemic, which was destined to snatch away the lives of so many of her beloved daughters. Then there were other trials about to strike more directly home: stringent academic requirements for teachers that had to be met, strong opposition to her long-cherished plans, and all the troubles and worries incident to a large building program.

Fortunately Mother Emma could not see so far ahead, and she was not given to useless fretting about things that only *might* happen. She preferred to spend her life "in living, and not in dying of fear,"[1] and so she bravely faced each new day in a spirit of faith, determined to give service to the utmost of her ability and to entrust the outcome to God. The following lines, which she once wrote on the back of a holy picture for the encouragement of a young Sister, embodied Mother Emma's own philosophy of life:

"Do not look at life's long sorrow;
See how small each moment's pain.
God will help thee for tomorrow,
So each day begin again."

Then she added a line of still deeper significance: "No eulogy is due him who simply does his duty and nothing more." How well those words of St. Augustine reflected Mother Emma's ideal of service!

To aid her in the accomplishment of her plans, she had as members of her council a group of trusted advisers and able helpers. Sister Victoria, who had been so long associated with her at the motherhouse, was chosen as her first assistant, while Mother Josephine, who was appointed local superior of the Thompson convent, became her second assistant. Sister Agreda Sperber, the treasurer of Kneipp Sanitarium since its foundation, was elected to fill that position for the entire Congregation. She did not reside at the motherhouse, however, until the year 1920, but was installed as superior of the sanitarium in September, 1911, to succeed Sister Ottilia Heckman, who had taken Sister Margaret's place after the latter's death. Sister Eustachia Moes, a veteran teacher, was made secretary general, while Sister Regula retained charge of the novices. Sister Angeline Betz was appointed directress of schools.[2]

In entrusting Sister Angeline with the important task of supervising all the schools of the Congregation, Mother Emma took into account her splendid qualifications as a teacher and her exemplary virtues as a religious. Early in life Sister Angeline had displayed ability as a teacher. Since the schools in her own home town, Custar, Wood County, Ohio, offered little opportunity for acquiring a good Catholic education, she was sent, at the age of eight, to St. Mary's Academy, Minster, Ohio, to complete her schooling. By the time she was twelve, she was conducting a small class in the convent school, and two years later she was teaching, as a substitute for a Sister who was ill, in the district school across the road.[3] Soon after her entrance into the community, she must have returned to Minster as a regular teacher[4] before being missioned to Assumption School in Nashville, Tennessee, where she remained from 1881 to 1887. That she exerted a lasting influence on her pupils as a young teacher is shown by the following letter, written fifty years later by one of her old boys who had never forgotten her:

> November 3, 1937
>
> My dear Sister Angeline:
>
> Mrs. Gus Blodau (Loula Huff) gave me the privilege of reading your letter of Sept. 22 — but what touched me deeply was your picture. It's nearly a half-century since I have seen you, and as I looked at your dear features you seemed about to speak to me — and how I wished that you could. And Loula says Sister Mary is with you. Sure, I would love to be near you again, you two grand souls, with your kindly understanding hearts. Wouldn't it be a most enjoyable stroll back down Memory Lane, meeting Sisters Agnes, Pauline — Fathers Clement, Paulinus, and Joseph — and all the funny-looking kids of those days — and good old Brother Barney — and Sister Consolata.
>
> We couldn't visualize in those days an Archbishop Stritch, Bishop Floersch — Father Bachman (Jake's son) and Sister Mary (Schneider) at St. Cecilia's.
>
> Well — at least I can look back over my shoulder along the road that leads to good old Assumption School and try to recite my German, stumble over my arithmetic, chant my rosary — and pump the old organ. Once more I pass into the old schoolhouse with a Good Morning, Sister — once more I listen as you guide my mind, heart and soul. Lord bless you.
>
> Sincerely,
>
> (*Signed*) W. S. (*Willie*) McKINSTRY
> Supt. Mails, Postoffice
> Nashville, Tenn.[5]

In 1886, when there was question of removing Sister Cecilia from the Minster public schools to take charge of the normal school at Greenwood, the members of the board of education would give their consent only on one condition — that "Sister Josephine Betz," whom they had earlier recognized as an able teacher, be engaged in her stead. The following year Sister Angeline was recalled to Minster, where she labored for twenty-five years with great fruitfulness, not only as a teacher but also as a personal guide and friend to the many boys and girls whom, year after year, she prepared for their solemn First Communion.[6]

In instructing children for their First Communion Sister Angeline could scarcely be excelled. It was her forte. She spared no effort or sacrifice to make that day stand out as the one unforgettable day of their lives. Her words were so full of unction that they sank deeply into the hearts of her charges and made a lasting impression. Years later, grey-haired men came to her with tears in their eyes to thank her again for the lessons she had imparted with so much fervor in the days of their youth. Many others, men and women alike, today hold her name in blessed memory. A convert to the Faith (1905) expressed his sentiments in the following words:

> For your prayers in the past I thank you, and again thank you for the gift of the little Miraculous Medal, almost thirty years ago. That little sacred object you placed in my hand at that time was the first material object that led the way to my conversion.[7]

A former student, recalling twenty-five years later the happy day of her First Communion, wrote the following sonnet:

To Sister Angeline

"A glorious morn! The golden sunbeams play —
A veil — a wreath — a dress of purest white —
In trembling hand a candle burning bright —
A peal of bells — a joyous, festive lay —
A solemn Mass! Oh, scarcely words convey
The eager longing of a heart contrite
The small white Host to kiss! O strange delight!

Heaven on earth! My First Communion day!
Ah, with that day of days in memory's chain
Is linked your name, who taught me to receive
And duly entertain the Guest Divine.
Then may my prayers for you this day obtain
That He your thirst for perfect love relieve
When daily on His breast you safe recline."[8]

Those who knew Sister Angeline intimately are convinced that her success as a spiritual leader of youth was due to her habitual cultivation of the interior life, which she strove to live intensely up to the very day of her death. In her private notebooks the most frequent entry is the resolve to keep in union with God through frequent ejaculatory prayer.[9] Truly in her were exemplified the words of Christ: "He that abideth in Me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit" (John xv, 5).

Even after her appointment to the office of directress of schools in the summer of 1911, the people of Minster urgently requested that Sister Angeline be permitted to return to their midst to round out her twenty-five successive years of teaching there. With so much insistence did they plead that her superiors were constrained, after a lapse of two months of the fall term, to allow her to go back and finish the school year.

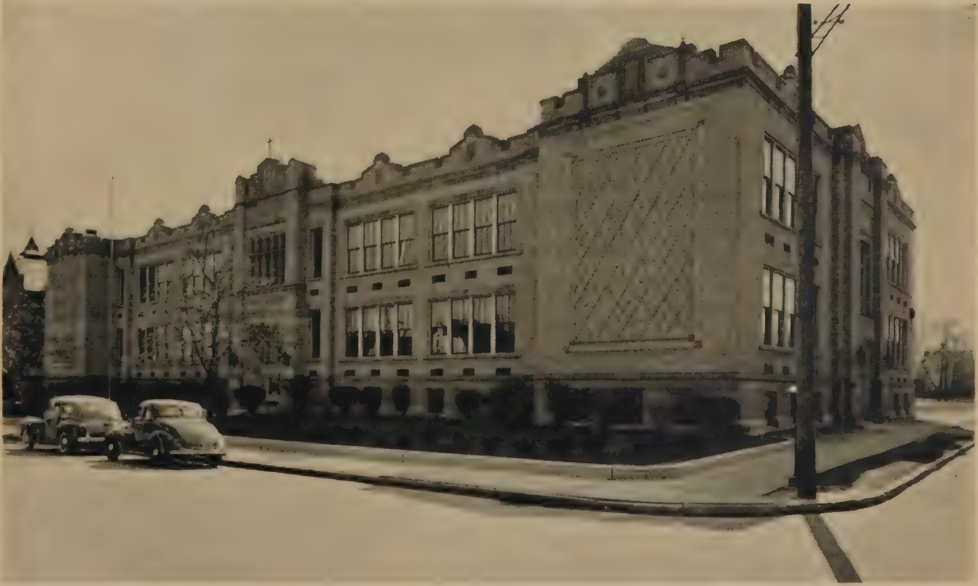
On December 22, 1911, an elaborate jubilee program, consisting of musical selections, appropriate addresses, and the presentation of gifts, was held in her honor. The contribution of the school children was, in their own words, "not one donated by our parents and friends, but one constructed by our own ingenuity, strength, and power." It comprised a complete course in nature study (Sister Angeline's hobby) with accompanying manuals, drawings, and specimens, worked out grade by grade — a gift which she appreciated more than anything else they could have given her. Two handsome wooden chests for preserving the drawings and specimens were made and presented by the manual-art class of the high school. The various speeches and a special poem dedicated to her on this occasion were printed in booklet form and entitled "Her Silver Jubilee." A copy of this booklet is preserved in the archives of the motherhouse as a token of undying love and gratitude seldom accorded any teacher.[10]

Returning to the motherhouse at the end of the school year 1912, Sister Angeline brought to her task as directress of schools firsthand knowledge of public school methods and of teachers' standards and requirements, gained through long association with public school officials. Guided by her motto, "Virtue, industry, and knowledge combined,"[11] she at once inaugurated a program for improving the professional training of the teachers and for raising the standards of the schools under her charge.

An initial step in carrying out this program was the introduction into the training school at the motherhouse, which had hitherto confined itself mostly to making the teachers proficient in elementary branches, of a full four-year high school course as a prerequisite for normal training.[12] In a few years the school reached such high standards that in May, 1915, it was granted state recognition as a first-grade high school. The state inspectors who visited the school on this occasion left with quite different notions of nuns and convents from those they had entertained on their arrival. They were impressed by the cordiality of the Sisters, and had little criticism to offer regarding the conditions of the school except a dearth of maps and a lack of college degrees on the part of most of the teachers.[13]

Serving on the faculty at this time was the new chaplain and spiritual director of the Sisters, Father August Seifert, who had come in July, 1913, to replace Father Albert Voag.[14] Shortly after the death of Father Henry Drees in 1909, patriarchal Father Joseph Heitz, with his flowing black beard, had been appointed permanent chaplain at Maria Stein. But the quiet, lonely life of a convent chaplain palled on him to such an extent that he became ill and the provincial saw fit to remove him.[15] In January, 1912, Father Joseph was succeeded by Father Albert Voag who, inured to the busy life of a pastor and the varied experiences of a missionary, found the life of a recluse no more to

St. Mark's Grade School, Cincinnati, Ohio



Precious Blood Grade School, Fort Wayne, Indiana

his liking than had the former.[16] Father August, on the contrary, a man of scholarly habits and tastes who had spent the greater part of his priestly life in the classroom, was glad to seek a haven of quiet and rest from the noisy pranks of lively school boys and from the incessant cares of a college rector. For almost twenty years he had been at St. Joseph's College, near Rensselaer, Indiana, where he was "not only an organizer, supervisor, procurator, and dean of studies of a steadily growing institution, but also a truly excellent professor."[17]

It was quite opportune that Father August should come to Maria Stein when Mother Emma was backing Sister Angeline's every effort to bring the normal school up to standards. He soon gave evidence of fulfilling the promise made to Mother Emma by Father Boniface Russ, the provincial, in notifying her of the appointment, that Father Augustine would be a support to the Sisters in every respect.[18]

As teacher of religion, church history, and Latin in the academic department, Father August found himself in his proper element. In place of the ordinary catechism he introduced, as the textbook in religion, Wilmer's *Handbook of the Christian Religion,* which he expected the novices and postulants to master in three years so completely as to be able at the end of that period to give all the reasons for the faith that was in them. His class in church history was enlivened by his humorous sallies and by his pointed comments on historical personages and events. Teaching Latin was his hobby. He required that the advanced class carry on Latin conversation, in which they attained such proficiency as to amaze the state representatives on their tour of inspection.

Father August's interests were not confined to the classroom. A great lover of the liturgy, he was anxious that all the ceremonies connected with divine service be carried out with proper dignity and exactness. He was particularly insistent upon the full enunciation of each syllable in community prayers and singing, occasionally admonishing the novices "to catch the little foxes," by which term he designated the careless slurring of certain syllables. Of course he was not introducing something new; it had always been a point of the Rule to pray slowly and distinctly and the Sisters had long been noted for their excellent vocalization in community praying, which was in turn imitated by their pupils. In 1899, Father F. M. Quatman, commenting on the course of studies drawn up by Sister Cecilia had written: "The Most Rev. Archbishop speaks highly of the clear and distinct pronunciation of the pupils in charge of your good Sisters, especially in their prayers."[19] Father August was anxious that a very old and praiseworthy tradition be not lost.

Punctual in all things, he could often be seen standing before the chapel clock, watch in hand, regulating the time to the split second. His whole day was planned and he was up to the schedule at every minute of the hour.

When not engaged in spiritual ministrations, teaching, or study, he might have been found pacing back and forth along the shady convent walks, thumbing his breviary, or kneeling on his prie-dieu in the sacristy, lost in profound adoration. Again his stalwart figure clad in cassock and crowned with a broad-brimmed straw hat, could be descried standing in the sun-drenched garden or fields as he watched the workmen hoe or seed the soil. When time hung too heavy on his hands, or a fit of loneliness came over him, he would crank his old Ford and be off for a jaunt to one of his old cronies in a nearby parish. Sometimes it was business that called him away. But he was always occupied. His interests were manifold and extended to every new invention which added to the convenience and comfort of the Sisters in particular and of mankind in general. "I was born just a generation too soon," he once remarked with a note of sadness in his voice as he was being shown through a newly equipped modern school.

Such were some of the patent traits of the man who was to be so closely linked with the spiritual and educational advancement of the Sisters of the Precious Blood during the next thirteen years. As to his inner self, no one could gainsay his personal holiness. His childlike piety, which he revealed so plainly in his sermons, instructions, and retreats as well as in his whole comportment about the altar, was a constant source of inspiration to the Sisters. His fatherly kindness, displayed in the confessional and in personal consultation, was known to all. His habits of industry, promptness, and exactness in the least things bespoke the many struggles against nature that must have preceded such complete mastery of self. True, he could be as strict, even severe, with others as he was with himself. He was utterly devoid of human respect when there was question of defending the rights or usages of the Church; he sometimes cut to the quick by his public denunciation of certain individuals, whom, however, he was careful not to mention by name. All in all, he was a living example of the Christlike life that he strove to form in the Sisters.

Father August was also a regular member of the teaching staff of the summer school, which had come to supplant the old-time teachers' institute. As early as 1914 the summer session of the community normal school was granted state recognition, which carried with it "all the rights for examination and certification of teachers," but which was valid only for that summer.[20] The program of studies included courses in psychology, general and primary methods, besides some regular academic branches: church history, Latin, mathematics, etc.

Every effort was made to improve the status of the summer school from year to year by engaging outside instructors and by enlarging the curriculum. Father Meinrad B. Koester of St. Joseph's College, Collegeville, Indiana, who served on the faculty each summer from 1915 to 1922, gave courses in science, English, and sociology. Father Arnold Weyman, also from St. Joseph's, conducted a class in English during the summer of 1915. Shorter series of lectures on art, music, and penmanship by specialists in those fields were arranged from time to time. In 1917 the summer school was honored by Doctor Thomas E. Shields, founder of the Catholic Sisters' College in Washington, who delivered three lectures, two on his own new reading series and one on the requisites of a good teacher. The daily conferences by Mother Emma must also be mentioned. In them she interpreted important points of the Rule, that had been revised in 1914, or explained the tenets of the new Canon Law applying to religious, which became effective in 1918. These informal talks revealed Mother Emma at her best and were eagerly attended by the Sisters.

A notable feature of the early summer school was the observation of primary teaching for the benefit of young prospective teachers who were about to enter the classroom for the first time. Sister Kostka Noel, an expert teacher, demonstrated primary methods by teaching several classes of children at St. John's School, a half-mile from the convent. After 1920, Sister Rosalie Alt conducted the classes.[21]

While the summer school showed steady improvement from the year 1914, it received no further recognition from the state until the summer of 1920, after the normal school had been fully accredited. The principal drawback was the lack of teachers with college degrees. This presented a serious problem, for prior to 1911, when the Catholic University opened its doors to teaching Sisters for the first time, little opportunity for college training under Catholic auspices had been available,[22] and ecclesiastical superiors would not allow religious women to frequent non-Catholic institutions.

In 1913, when an urgent invitation was extended by the Catholic University to the Sisters of the Precious Blood to give some of their promising members the chance to acquire college degrees, Sister Angeline, ever alert to educational advantages for her teachers, responded at once by sending four Sisters to attend summer school. Sister Rosalie Alt and Sister Grace Pratt registered for courses in the arts and sciences, and Sister Prisca Simbeck and Sister Prudentia Hune took special classes in music. At this time the high school at the motherhouse was affiliated with the Catholic University, and during the following spring students of this department took the uniform examinations for the first time.[23]

In the summer of 1914, St. Xavier's College in Cincinnati began a summer school which offered courses leading to college degrees. Since more Sisters could be registered here with less expense than in Washington, six teachers were selected to attend the summer school at its opening. Thenceforth, summer after summer saw an increasing number of Sisters given the opportunity of college training.[24] The situation was not yet ideal, since the courses were not at first well co-ordinated with the professional needs of the elementary teachers, but improvement was made as time went on. The inauguration of Saturday extension courses accelerated the work for Sisters who resided in the vicinity of Cincinnati.

Meanwhile, since the need for teachers with college degrees was pressing at home, Mother Emma sent Sister Rosalie and Sister Grace to the Catholic Sisters' College in the fall of 1915 to obtain the required residence credits, and in the following June they received the Bachelor's degree. Sister Rosalie returned to Washington the next year to work toward a Master's degree; Sister Grace, the year after that.[25]

From 1915 on, two or more Sisters matriculated each year at the Catholic University and a number registered annually at St. Xavier's, Cincinnati; in 1924 many more took extension courses in the college department of the new motherhouse, which was affiliated with the University of Dayton. By the time Mother Emma retired from office in 1924, four Sisters held Masters' degrees while about twenty had obtained a Bachelor's degree in philosophy or in the arts.[26] This was a noteworthy achievement if one considers the time and circumstances. It was indicative of Mother Emma's progressive spirit in educational matters despite her own lack of academic training. "The religious spirit of the Sisters has not suffered through their attendance at college," she was once heard to remark.

Before proceeding with the development of the normal school at the motherhouse, it is well to review a situation that was created by the World War. Prior to the outbreak of the war, the majority of candidates were foreign-born. Naturally, community prayers, sermons, and instructions were in German, and English-speaking candidates had to adapt themselves to existing conditions by learning the German prayers, if not the language. In the summer of 1912, Sister Regula, with Sister Ernestina as her traveling companion, brought back the last group of postulants from abroad.[27] Once Europe was plunged into the seething animosities of the World War, it was no longer possible for the community to obtain candidates from the old country; it became imperative thenceforth to encourage more vocations among American girls if the Congregation was to endure. Realizing the seriousness of the situation, Mother Emma, acting without precedent, and with some opposition, introduced English prayers in common, requesting also that the sermon, at least on alternate Sundays, be delivered in English. She thought thereby to attract more vocations at home. The number of applicants gradually increased from year to year, reaching the normal twenty or more after 1918.

Some of these American candidates were high school graduates or had completed at least several years of secondary school work; one or the other had been a teacher and held some normal credits. Since it was not customary to send novices elsewhere for the purpose of study, it was found advisable to offer courses in the novitiate beyond the high school level. Sister Angeline bent all her energy, therefore, on bringing the community normal school up to standards so that by the end of their novitiate at least some of the young Sisters could be sent out as properly certified teachers.

In the fall of 1917, Sister Rosalie, having received her Master's degree in education, was kept at the motherhouse to take charge of the normal school. She, in conjunction with Sister Angeline, devoted much time and attention to the organization of a two-year normal school system that would meet the requirements of the state in every respect: material equipment, a well-planned course of study including provisions for observation and practice teaching, and adequate teacher personnel.

Finally in November, 1919, through the kind intervention of Mr. G. J. Keinath, former county superintendent of schools in Putnam County, and Mr. H. J. Benning, former superintendent of the Glandorf public schools, the Normal School of the Precious Blood was approved by the Ohio State Department of Education.[28] The Sisters have always felt deeply indebted to these good friends of the community, who spared neither time nor labor, carrying on a copious correspondence and making several trips to Columbus and Maria Stein in the interests of the normal school.[29] These schoolmen have been a constant moral support to the Sisters by their encouraging words, helpful suggestions, and ever-ready assistance. The approval of the normal school, which also carried over to the summer session, entitled the graduates to a four-year elementary provisional certificate without further examination. The problem of adequate teacher preparation was temporarily solved.

While striving for better conditions in the normal school at home, Sister Angeline did not neglect the supervision of the schools on the missions. As early as November, 1912, a few months after she had returned from Minster, she accompanied Mother Emma on a visitation of the distant mission of St. Mary's in Phoenix, Arizona. Upon her re-election to the generalship the previous year, Mother Emma had entrusted this outpost mission, which she herself had directed for five happy years, to the competent care of Sister Electa Fleck. The Phoenix Sisters welcomed the two visitors with unfeigned pleasure. It was always an event when the East met the West, especially when one of the callers was their beloved Mother Emma.

Mother Emma found St. Mary's in a flourishing condition, and prospects pointed to a still brighter future, particularly because of the admission of Arizona as the forty-eighth state of the Union on February 14, 1912, a day "never to be forgotten by all loyal Arizonians, young and old." With statehood came improved water and lighting facilities, paved streets, and a general air of progressiveness. In the course of the same year Sister Electa, at the request of Mother Emma, had the Sisters' house enlarged by the addition of an east and a west wing to accommodate the growing family of Sisters, as well as the boarders and orphans. The second story of the new west wing was set aside for a beautiful chapel in consideration of the rights of the Master of the household, Who always claimed the first attention of the Sisters as He had done from the very beginning of the community. There was also a change made that fall in the teaching staff: Sister Hildebertha Stall was replaced by Sister Rosella Ehrbar as principal of St. Mary's School.[30]

While Mother Emma and Sister Angeline were still visiting in Phoenix, they received an invitation from Father Peter Wallischeck, O. F. M., to come to the San Luis Rey Mission in California to see what could be done about establishing a school there.[31] Father Peter had lately been appointed superior of the mission, having already served as rector of St. Anthony's College in Santa Barbara. He missed the gay shouts of the boys at their play and was dreaming of making the grounds about the old mission, then so quiet and desolate, ring once again with the happy laughter of children.[32] It was scarcely more than a half-century since little Indians had swarmed by the hundreds about the broad sheep ranches stretching acre upon acre from the old mission of San Luis Rey, which has become famous in literature as part of the setting of Helen Hunt Jackson's celebrated classic, *Ramona.* Here the saintly Father Antonio Peyri, the founder of the "King of the Missions," had baptized thousands of Indians and was more than a father to the neophytes during the thirty-four years (1798-1832) that he labored among them. He ministered to their needs of body and soul and taught them the ways of civilization, until grasping Mexican land robbers forced him to leave. The erecting of a Catholic school where children would once more be brought up in the love and fear of God would be a Christian way of avenging the havoc that had resulted from secular control of the mission.

Mother Emma, ever ready for some new adventure, accepted Father Peter's invitation, and she and Sister Angeline went to investigate conditions at San Luis Rey. Father Peter unfolded to them his plan of having the Sisters open a boarding school under the shadow of the old mission church for girls of moderate means residing in the outlying districts, and a day school for the few children who lived within walking distance of the mission. He had presented his plan, he said, to Bishop Conaty, and had obtained his permission to build a school on condition that he (Father Peter) could induce Sisters to settle in so unpromising a district and be sure of obtaining a sufficient number of pupils to make the project worthwhile. Despite the remoteness of the place and the poor prospects it offered for future success, Mother Emma promised "for the sake of the old memories that cluster around the hallowed spot" to send several Sisters the following September, provided that suitable accommodations would be ready for them, a school wherein to teach, and children to be taught.[33]

Faithful to her promise, Mother Emma requested Sister Electa the following summer to go to California with several Sisters and find out whether sufficient preparations were being made to warrant the opening of a school in the fall. Accompanied by Sister Rosella, Sister Attala Missler, and Sister Rosamunda Hoying, Sister Electa, after a four-hour delay in the desert, arrived in San Luis Rey on the feast of St. Ann. Father Peter and a Mexican were at Oceanside, a town four miles from the mission, with horses and spring wagons to meet the Sisters. It was rough riding to San Luis Rey, and when they reached there — what a disappointment! Not a building in sight except the mission itself and an old adobe stable filled with farm implements, straw, and dirt. The only sign of construction was a foundation 15 x 35 scarcely showing above the ground. Where were the Sisters to put up that night? But big-hearted Father Peter had made ample provision for them. They were escorted to a house about five blocks away, which they found furnished and well stocked with food. At least they would not starve.

The Sisters were kept busy for the next two weeks canning the fruit which the Fathers brought in abundance and repairing church vestments and linens which had been sadly neglected.

But nothing was said of a school building, and no move was being made to add to the foundation which seemed destined, like the one in the Gospel, never to be finished.[34] Finally, on August 10, Sister Electa broached the subject to Father Peter, pointing out that it was useless for Mother Emma to send Sisters if there were neither school building nor pupils and remarking that she felt it her plain duty to write and tell the Reverend Mother so. Her words were like magic in the immediate results they produced. At once Father Peter set two Brothers to work on the foundation, and although the four walls rose slowly, there was at least some tangible evidence that a school was building. The inside partitions of the new structure were of beaverboard and the roof, which resembled a lid more than anything else, was of tarred paper. In connecting the new building with the old adobe stable, which was to serve as a part of the school, the Brothers encountered the greatest difficulty. But the work was nearing completion, and Sister Electa no longer hesitated to impart the news to Mother Emma.

On August 20, Sister Annetta Schneider came from Phoenix to be the first superior of the new mission, and two weeks later Sister Decima Weis and Sister Hilda Kunz arrived from Ohio. Two of the other Sisters returned to Phoenix, but Sister Electa stayed a while longer until the newcomers became acclimated. Sister Rosamunda was the only one of the original group destined to remain permanently.

Meanwhile, Father Dominic Gallardo went about enlisting pupils for the school. By September 10, the date of the opening, twelve boarders and several day pupils from some Spanish families in the vicinity were enrolled. It was indeed a small beginning without presage of future prosperity. But Father Peter's dream had at length come true — San Luis Rey had its school.

Contrary to the expectations of most persons interested in the enterprise, the school progressed from year to year. The fall after the opening the enrollment was doubled, so that it became necessary to move an extra building onto the school premises.

Through the generous aid of kind friends, especially Mr. Jerome O'Neil of the Santa Magarita Ranch, and Mrs. Van Kilsdonk, several other additions were made during the next few years. In 1915 a high school department for girls was added, which attracted students from greater distances. Gradually the San Luis Rey Boarding School came to be more widely known as an educational institution of high scholastic standards as well as a school of training in the household arts.

Besides this school, opened in California in 1913, several other schools were taken over in Ohio: St. John's in Deer Park, north of Cincinnati, where a new parish had been founded; Holy Name, a school for Hungarians in Dayton; and Holy Trinity at Coldwater. In 1915, the Sisters were asked to open a school at Columbus Grove, near Ottawa, and in 1917, a small rural school at Alvada. About the same time schools at Bellefontaine, Ohio, Montrose, Missouri, and Lawrenceburg,[35] Tennessee, were given up for important reasons. Lawrenceburg was the last stronghold of the Precious Blood to be relinquished in Tennessee, where the Sisters had been laboring fruitfully for almost fifty years.

During the decade 1914-1924 the Sisters of the Precious Blood entered more and more into the field of secondary education. They had been conducting several two- to three-year commercial high schools at Celina, since 1900; at Wapakoneta, since 1908; at St. Mary's, Dayton, since 1910. Also they had been engaged in the Minster Public High School since 1907, and in Glandorf since 1911. But after 1914, when the demand for Catholic secondary schools became more urgent, owing especially to the enactment of new school laws, high schools were being established in many parishes and an increasing number of teachers were being prepared for this field of education. The high school department was added to the boarding school of San Luis Rey in 1915. In 1917, St. Mary's High School in Phoenix was opened to boys and girls, and continued coeducational till 1928, when Brophy College enrolled the Catholic boys of Phoenix. St. Mary's High School, Dayton, also coeducational, was fully accredited by the state in 1921, but was discontinued in 1928, when the Sisters of Notre Dame opened Julienne and the Brothers of Mary, Chaminade, as diocesan high schools, in accordance with the plan of Archbishop McNicholas. In 1918, two Sisters were engaged to teach in the Ottoville Public High School. By 1924, high schools were started also in Cleveland, St. Mary's, Ottawa, and Botkins.[36]

Under the guidance of Sister Angeline and with the approval and encouragement of Mother Emma, educational methods and standards in the Congregation continued to keep abreast of the times. Neither labor nor cost was spared in preparing efficient teachers who would signalize themselves not only in the secular branches but also as inspirational guides of youth through their example of Christlike living. Textbooks and methods change in the course of time, but the words of admonition of Father Brunner that echo out of the past have always been found applicable: "The Sister engaged in teaching is similar to a lighted candle placed on a candlestick; let it be her duty to shed light."[37]

Chapter VI

BUILDING PROJECTS AND VARIOUS ACTIVITIES

IN EXPLAINING the spirit of the original Rule, Father Brunner had written: "The activities of our Sisters are manifold and of great variety, and must be assigned according to circumstances, and according to the abilities of the individual Sister."[1] That injunction is still valid. The Congregation of the Precious Blood continues to offer its members who have either no inclination or no aptitude for teaching a variety of occupations that call for the exercise of specific talents or skills. Some Sisters are engaged almost exclusively in artistic pursuits such as music, painting and lettering, embroidering, making church vestments and ornaments, or moulding and painting statues. Others are needed for nursing the sick, caring for orphans or the aged, or doing office work. A large group find their life work, as did Mary the Mother of God, in the performance of ordinary household duties in the small mission homes or in large institutions.

One of the important tasks to which the first Sisters devoted their time, it will be remembered, was the domestic work in the seminary founded by Father Brunner at Loewenberg. This practice, which fitted in with Mother Brunner's plan to be of utmost assistance to priests through prayer and personal service, became traditional in the Congregation. Before the separation of the two communities the Sisters, as a rule, provided for the temporal needs of the priests and Brothers. It is true that after the erection of St. Charles Seminary in 1860, Brothers were employed exclusively at first to do the domestic work in that institution,[2] but in 1879 the Sisters were requested to take charge. Later they were engaged at St. Joseph's College, Collegeville, Indiana, and at St. Mary's Novitiate, Burkettsville, Ohio.[3]

In 1916, Archbishop Moeller obtained Sisters to take over the domestic department of the Fenwick Club, a Catholic boarding house in Cincinnati for boys and young men, which was then under the direction of Father (later Monsignor) Charles E. Baden.[4] At first only four Sisters were sent to manage the work. By 1917, however, when two hundred soldiers, besides as many boys and young men, were boarded and lodged at the Fenwick, the number of Sisters rose to sixteen; after the war the number dropped to thirteen. Although the Sisters were shown every consideration, and private apartments, almost cloistral in their seclusion, were set apart for their use, neither the surroundings nor the type of work was well suited to the religious life. Mother Emma regretted afterward that she had been induced under pressure from higher authority to take over the work. But in the course of time the Sisters were relieved of this charge. World-wide economic depression did not spare this flourishing institution and in 1937 it passed into the hands of the Board of Catholic Charities. The Sisters then withdrew permanently.[5]

In the summer of 1917, Dr. T. E. Shields requested Archbishop Moeller to use his influence in obtaining the services of the Sisters of the Precious Blood for the domestic department of the Catholic Sisters' College at Washington, D. C. Doctor Shields made a trip to Maria Stein "to arrange the details, and to reach a complete understanding."[6] Mother Emma, at a loss for Sisters to do the work, had recourse to two able teachers who were also well versed in the culinary art. Imbued with the spirit of the community, which regards all kinds of work imposed by obedience as of equal value before God, Sister Felicia Kehl and Sister Irma Roling willingly acceded to her wishes, and with Sister Grace, who was to be directress of the small community while pursuing courses leading to a Master's degree, formed the first little band to come to the assistance of Doctor Shields. Several weeks later they were joined by Sister

Laurentine Lennartz, a candidate for the Bachelor's degree, Sister Lamberta Pittroff and Sister Maxima Deppen. Mother Emma and Sister Regula remained a week with the pioneers, helping them to bring order out of chaos. A whole chapter could be written by the Sisters on their experiences during the first few months in Washington, but it will suffice to mention here that their efforts were appreciated, as the following lines from Doctor Shields show:

> I cannot put into words my deep sense of gratitude to your community for the services they are rendering to us. I have heard nothing but praise on all sides, for their work. I would be hard to please, indeed, if I were not pleased with your Sisters. Of course, we do need another Sister very badly, and I feel sure that you will send one to us as soon as you possibly can. In the meanwhile, you may rest assured that your Sisters have been doing everything possible in the interests of the college and to please the Sisters in attendance. I have not yet gone into the economic side of the situation, but I know that the Sisters are helping us in an hundred ways that will be bound to show when we come to a balancing of our ledgers.[7]

Archbishop Moeller paid a compliment to the efficiency of the Sisters as housekeepers when in October, 1917, he entrusted them with the management of his own household, which had recently been established in Norwood. Three Sisters, with Sister Julia Duerler as directress, were sent in answer to the archbishop's earnest solicitation.

Two years later he entreated Mother Emma for Sisters to take over the management of St. Theresa's Home for the Aged in Cincinnati, which had been functioning for several years under lay auspices. The arrangement was not proving satisfactory, and the board of directors entertained the hope that under the care of the Sisters the institution would be placed on a more solid basis.[8] Mother Emma, much as she desired to comply with the wishes of the archbishop in undertaking this truly charitable work, found it "next to impossible" to supply even the three Sisters that were at first requested. Father John Hickey, one of the directors, was disappointed on hearing of Mother Emma's answer, for he had arranged everything to receive the Sisters, so sure he was that they would come. Archbishop Moeller made another appeal, asking to have the Sisters at least by January, 1920. "It will increase my Christmas joy, as well as that of the directors and the inmates," he wrote.[9] Mother Emma at length capitulated. Early in the year 1920 three Sisters arrived in Cincinnati to begin a type of work — care for the aged — which has since been included among the several external activities of the Congregation.[10]

St. Gregory's Seminary was the last institution to engage the Sisters of the Precious Blood for domestic work before Mother Emma went out of office. In 1923, Sister Irma was recalled from Washington, D. C., to direct the domestic department of the preparatory seminary, which had been under the management of the Sisters of Charity.[11]

To meet the demand for Sisters to carry on these various works was becoming increasingly difficult. It meant a drain especially on the large convents, which needed the services of young able Sisters, since many of the older ones were no longer capable of fulfilling household duties, not to mention the heavier work out of doors. At the suggestion of Archbishop Moeller, therefore, most of the convents of perpetual adoration were gradually given up in favor of the more active apostolate which time and circumstances were demanding of the Sisters.[12]

With regret they relinquished their semi-cloistral mode of life to engage in occupations that would necessarily bring them in direct contact with the world. Some of the more conservative members questioned the advisability of breaking with tradition, thereby deviating somewhat from the original aim of the community — to honor the Precious Blood in as many places as possible by the practice of perpetual adoration. But Mother Emma realized that the living voice of Holy Church is the surest expression of the will of God; that as the Church prudently adapts herself to times and conditions, so individual communities make no mistake in "shifting with the times" as long as they do not sacrifice any of the principles of religious life. Today no one doubts the wisdom of Mother Emma's course of action in giving up some of the old convents.

The convent at Egypt was the first to be sold during her second term of office. Notice of the impending sale was made to the members of the chapter in a circular letter of June 21, 1912,[13] and on July 9 the deal was closed. Mother Emma was present at the last solemn Mass offered in the chapel at Egypt. She was sorry to see the convent that held for her[14] so many memories of her early religious life, pass into the hands of strangers. But mere sentiment meant little to her when there was question of a higher duty to be fulfilled. The will of God was her sole rule of action.

Before entering upon negotiations for selling the convent of the Sorrowful Mother at Glandorf, Ohio, she was advised to lay the matter before Bishop Schrembs of Toledo, since the convent was under his jurisdiction. The bishop, sorry to learn of her decision to give up this convent, asked her to withhold the final step until he could speak with her personally.[15] Arrangements were made to have Mother Emma meet Bishop Schrembs and Mother Theresa of the Poor Clares at Glandorf the following month. The outcome of this meeting was that Mother Emma generously offered the convent building and a small tract of land to the bishop for the use of a contemplative Order.

This offer was not accepted immediately, however, and nothing definite was done about the matter. More than a year elapsed before Mother Emma again conferred with Bishop Schrembs. He expressed his disappointment at not seeing this convent, which had "served so long as a house of prayer and religious life, preserved for the use of a contemplative Order." But he would not stand in the way of the sale; he only stipulated that the convent proper and the chapel be torn down.[16]

With all obstacles removed, Mother Emma applied for and received permission from Archbishop Moeller on May 27, 1915, to sell the Glandorf convent and the surrounding tract of 153 acres.[17] Thereupon the parishioners of the local parish, under the leadership of their pastor, Father Liberat Schupp, undertook to build near the church a modern, commodious residence for the teaching Sisters who were to remain to conduct classes in the district school.

By December of the same year, plans for abandoning Mary's Home, in Jay County, Indiana, were under consideration. The Sisters there were too old or incapacitated for hard work, and there were no younger, able Sisters to relieve them. Besides, it was necessary to build a pilgrim house for the accommodation of the increasing numbers of visitors to the shrine of Maria Steig, Thompson, and to erect a new chapel and annex at Rome City. The community had no debts at the time, but funds were needed to further these building projects. With the consent of the chapter, therefore, Mother Emma readily obtained the approval of Archbishop Moeller for selling Mary's Home and property.[18]

A similar fate might have befallen the convent at New Riegel, had not sentiment prevailed. Too many hallowed associations cluster about this, the cradle of the Community of the Precious Blood in America, to allow it to be put up for sale to the highest bidder. Recently remodeled, it now serves as a quiet haven for old and infirm Sisters.

A part of the Mother of God Convent at Greenwood still stands, although the Sisters withdrew as early as 1923. Since no favorable opportunity to sell presented itself, the farm was rented, and some of the produce from the fertile soil is still brought to the motherhouse at Salem Heights,[19] Dayton, Ohio.

In lieu of the convents thus abandoned, Mother Emma had been envisioning for several years a spacious motherhouse built near a city, where the Sisters could have ready access to all municipal facilities. Few members questioned the need of a larger building to accommodate the majority of the teaching

Sisters during the summer months, when they returned from their missions for study and relaxation. The main point at issue was the place where the building should be erected.

A conservative group, led by Mother Ludovica, favored building at Maria Stein. The quiet countryside, they contested, was more conducive to fostering the religious spirit; proximity to city life with all its glare and distractions might be the occasion of letting down the barriers of religious life and admitting the spirit of the world.

The more progressive members, headed by Mother Emma and supported in their views by the archbishop, preferred to build near Dayton, Ohio, where they could have adequate water, lighting, and transportation facilities. But the really impelling motive which inspired Mother Emma with courage to face all odds was her long-cherished desire of having perpetual exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. Even the sight of Mother Ludovica on her knees, pleading with her before a large assembly of Sisters, did not move Mother Emma to change her mind.[20] In one of her circular letters to the members of the chapter she clearly stated her position:

> Regarding the building of the motherhouse, nothing has been decided so far. As long as we can hold no prospect of having perpetual exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at Maria Stein, I can take no measures to obtain the permission of the Most Reverend Archbishop to build here. I believe this is also the wish of the majority of the Sisters. Once we have prospects of obtaining this privilege for here, Maria Stein will certainly be as preferable to me as it is to every one of you. We must have patience, wait, and, above all, pray and let Divine Providence direct.[21]

Archbishop Moeller was hesitant about granting permission for perpetual exposition at Maria Stein. The chapel was too sequestered to allow the privilege to be shared by a large number of the faithful. If the exposition chapel were built near a city, it would be more readily accessible to those who wished to frequent it.[22] In a printed circular entitled "A Word to Our Friends," which was sent out to relatives and benefactors as an appeal for contributions to the new chapel fund, the same argument was set forth. "This privilege [perpetual exposition of the Blessed Sacrament], however, will not be ours alone; it may be enjoyed by all who love Jesus and wish to pay Him a visit on His Eucharistic throne, either in person or in spirit."[23]

In the summer of 1912, Mother Emma took the first actual step toward the realization of her dream by purchasing, with the consent of her council, a tract of seventy-five acres two miles north of Dayton. The site was elevated, the soil arable, well-drained, and covered with five acres of timber besides several fruit orchards. Water was supplied by five fresh-water springs on the premises.[24]

The responses of the members of the chapter to the letter notifying them of this purchase were, for the most part, favorable. There were only a few dissenters. But when Father August Seifert, the new chaplain and spiritual director, entered the picture the following year, the tables were turned. By writing a long circular letter to the members of the chapter, in which he set forth arguments favoring the erection of a new building at Maria Stein, he succeeded in winning over a number of the Sisters to his view, which was Mother Ludovica's also.[25] Then the real controversy began. So much sentiment against building at Dayton was created that no further steps could be taken for several years.

Mother Emma's re-election to the generalship in 1917 brought new hope. At least her views were not altogether discountenanced. But the entrance of the United States into the World War in the spring of the same year precluded any immediate execution of her plans, which had to be deferred indefinitely. Meanwhile she prayed and pondered, resigned to wait until Divine Providence should appoint the day and the hour for her to act.

At length in the summer of 1921, nine years after the purchase of the site, the time was found propitious to begin building the new motherhouse. On August 1 ground was broken, and on Thanksgiving Day the cornerstone was laid with solemn ceremonies. During the next two years work on the magnificent structure went steadily forward. Eighty-two additional acres were bought and the farmland was put under cultivation so that some provisions would be on hand when the Sisters moved into their new home.[26]

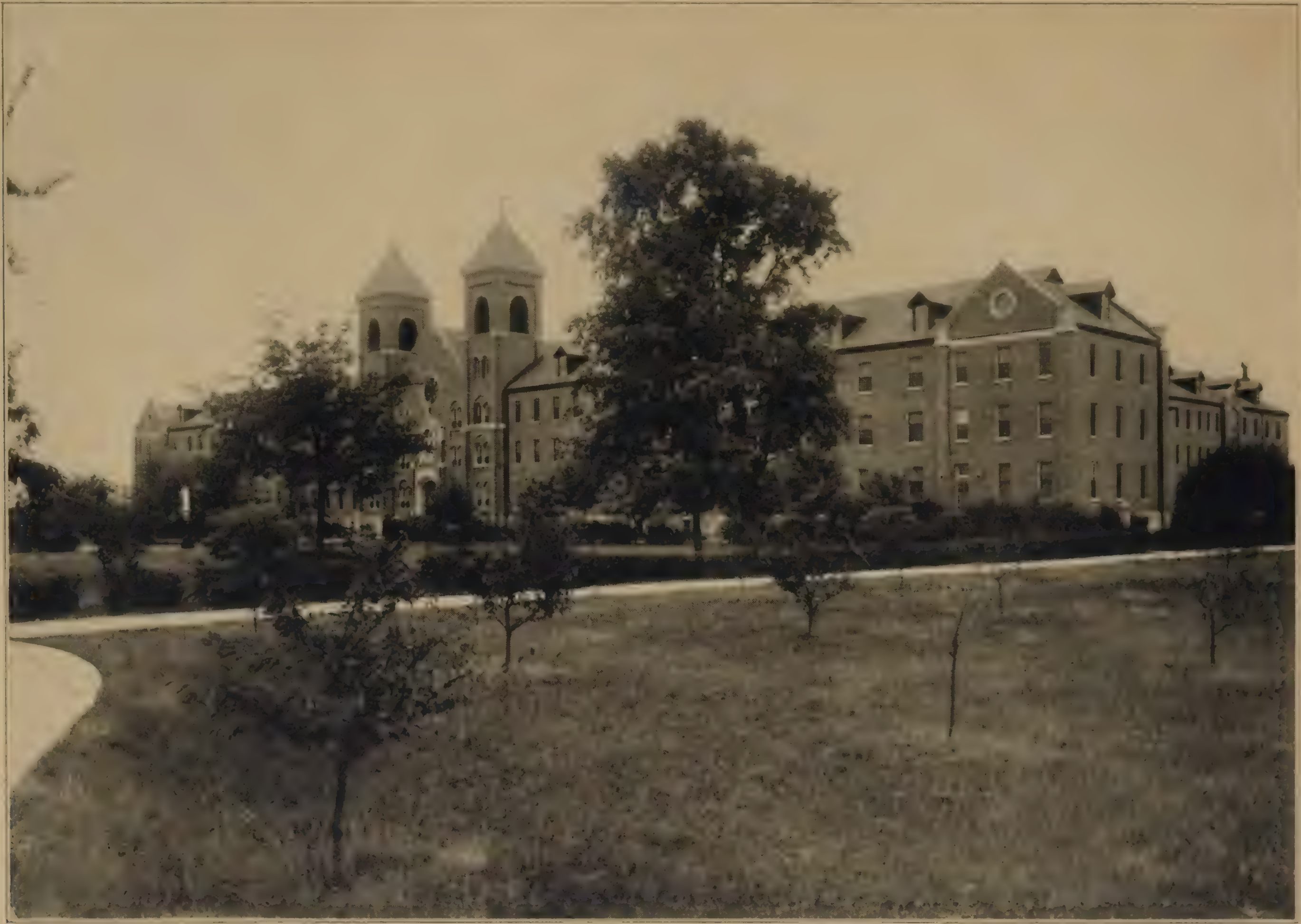
A small room (the present relic chapel) was fitted out to serve as a temporary chapel until the large one would be completed. Here on June 2, 1923, Father Francis Shalk, the chaplain of St. Joseph's Orphanage, offered the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for the first time in the new motherhouse. How truly he could say with the Psalmist, as he lit the sanctuary lamp to announce the Eucharistic presence of Our Lord in His new abode: *"Paravi lucernam Christo meo"* (Ps. CXXXI, 17). Thenceforth, daily services were held by the temporary chaplain, Father George Greivenkamp, to accommodate the Sisters who were residing there that summer. It was their task to remove the débris and to make the house habitable for the other Sisters, who would arrive toward the end of summer.

The feast of St. Augustine, August 28, 1923, will go down in the annals as a memorable day for the community, since it marks the departure of the Sisters from the old motherhouse to the new. The pain occasioned by the severance of the many ties that bound them to Maria Stein was somewhat mitigated by the joyous expectancy with which they approached their future home. Knights of Columbus of Dayton offered to transport the Sisters to Salem Heights, where they were welcomed with the pealing of bells and the greetings of the Sisters who had arrived earlier.[27]

Features of the new building that especially commend themselves are its spaciousness, its simplicity, and its practical arrangement. It is an E-shaped edifice with a frontage measuring almost a city block and three large wings extending to the back. The chapel, which is as large as a city church, forms the center bar, while the professed Sisters' quarters and the novitiate are housed in the right and left bar, respectively. A spacious hall connecting all parts of the building makes it possible to hold religious processions at any time of the year. The whole arrangement is well adapted to the needs of a well-ordered motherhouse.

On September 8, 1923, the chapel was dedicated to the Immaculate Conception by Archbishop Moeller.[28] This occasion brought many visitors to inspect the building — some of them interested relatives and friends, and others curious neighbors who were eager to verify the rumor that the convent was housing stores of ammunition in the basement. The covered trucks conveying household goods from Maria Stein, which for weeks during the summer had been seen driving up at the convent in the early hours of the morning, seem to have given grounds for this suspicion. The tale may have been started by members of the Ku Klux Klan, who, to arouse bigotry, made the Sisters out to be revolutionists liable to rise up in rebellion at any moment. One night, a few months after the Sisters were settled in their new home, a huge cross was burned on the lot directly opposite the building. But the Sisters, having given evidence that they were law-abiding citizens and peaceable neighbors, were no further molested.

In the summer of 1923, election of officers should have been held. However, owing to the unfinished building program and the unsettled conditions in the community caused by the transfer of the residence of the community to Dayton, the Sisters applied to the Holy See to have Mother Emma's term of office extended one year. At the end of that time, Mother Emma, having rendered nineteen years of devoted service as head of the community, gladly resigned her charge to her successor, Mother Agreda Sperber. She herself was chosen assistant to the new Mother General. Other officers elected in the summer of 1924 included Sister Rose Nageleisen as second assistant and secretary, Sister Victoria Drees as treasurer, and Sisters Angeline Betz, Rosalie Alt, Clementine Enneking, and Regis Kirschner as the four consultors. Sister Theresita Bert-



Present Motherhouse of the Sisters of the Precious Blood, Salem Heights, Dayton, Ohio

ing, who had succeeded Sister Regula Dann as novice mistress in 1920, was reappointed to that office.[29]

In 1917 Sister Regula had been elected one of the consultors, while retaining her office as mistress of novices. But since her health was failing more and more, she was forced to relinquish the latter charge, which she had held for over twenty years. Her novices of former days will remember her as a person who demanded their utmost respect while retaining their love and confidence. Though agile in her movements, she bore herself with dignified mien. She spoke briefly and decisively, her dark, piercing eyes often conveying more meaning than mere words. Her constant aim was to develop in her novices a sense of responsibility in practical affairs along with a deep religious spirit that would stand the stress and strain of life on the missions. Anything that savored of sentimentalism, affectation, or softness had no place in her system of training. And yet her somewhat severe manner belied a heart, sensitive, affectionate, and keenly alive to the needs and interests of her charges, as many of them were to discover later.

The last year of her life was one of untold suffering. She was afflicted with cancer, from which there was no hope of recovery. She died on June 23, 1921, during the first summer retreat, when many of her former novices could be present to attend the funeral services of their revered mistress.[30] On receiving notice of her death, Archbishop Moeller wrote: "She always impressed me as being a model religious, who in her own life carried out the lessons she endeavored to bring home to her novices."[31] Anyone who knew Sister Regula would willingly endorse that statement.

Another well-known member, Sister Cecilia Lang, who was universally loved by the Sisters, had also been claimed by death during Mother Emma's second term. Having been relieved of her duties as secretary general in 1911, she had taught several years before her appointment as superior of the Greenwood convent. Then came the influenza epidemic of the winter of 1916, which carried off within a fortnight six of the elderly Sisters under Sister Cecilia's charge. She herself was the seventh and last victim in that house, a fact that was not without its significance according to one Sister's interpretation: "When Sister Cecilia, always imbued as she was with love for and loyalty to the community, went to God, she must have asked Him to let up taking Sisters from Greenwood." Her death occurred on January 23, 1916.[32]

Among the many other Sisters who were called to their reward during the decade 1911-1921, Mother Josephine deserves special mention. She had entered as a postulant in 1857, during Father Brunner's lifetime, though she probably never saw him, and for forty years had dedicated her energies to the duties of the classroom. In 1901 she was made superior of the convent at New Riegel, and after her term as Mother General, of the convent at Thompson. There she died, after a short illness, on June 27, 1917.[33]

A real personality among the Sisters who passed away about this time was Sister Aloysia Galezia, a convert to the Faith, the daughter of a Protestant mother who was a typical Yankee. Sister Aloysia was engaged in teaching until her gift of working marvels with wax was discovered and she was permitted to follow her artistic bent. Thenceforth, the little figures of the Infant Jesus and the realistic fruit which she molded from wax were in constant demand and brought in many orders from outsiders. But she did not devote herself exclusively to this art. A lifelong student, she spent some of her leisure time in the private study of philosophy, astronomy, and biology. A great lover of the Blessed Sacrament, she spent many hours in prayer before the tabernacle. Devotion to the Most Holy Trinity was her special attraction. It was her yearly ambition to recite the doxology one thousand times on the feast of the Holy Trinity. After much suffering caused by a dropsical condition, Sister Aloysia died in the convent at New Riegel on September 29, 1915.[34]

Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, kept alive and nourished by daily Mass and Holy Communion and further strengthened by daily and nightly hours of adoration, may be called a family trait of the Community of the Precious Blood. It accounts to a great extent for the peaceful and even holy deaths of many other Sisters. Mother Emma, herself aglow with love for the Blessed Sacrament and all that pertains to Its worship, ever tried to enkindle anew this devotion in the hearts of her Sisters. "What a consolation at the hour of death," she wrote to them in her Christmas letter of 1918, "will be those hours of prayer spent before the Tabernacle; in particular, those hours spent there, not out of a sense of duty, but out of pure love for Jesus. Then can we say with confidence, 'Sweet Jesus, be not my Judge, but my Savior.' "[35] Indeed, it was fidelity to this devotion that won for the Congregation the unique privileges, old and new, which holy Mother Church saw fit to bestow upon it.

Chapter VII

MOTHER AGREDA ASSUMES CHARGE

PERPETUAL adoration of the Blessed Sacrament was the original purpose that brought the Community of the Sisters of the Precious Blood into existence. This purpose gave impetus to their efforts to expand, to gain a foothold in America, and to develop into a well-organized religious institute approved by the Church. Through the vicissitudes of the years they remained steadfast in their purpose to serve as a continuous guard of honor for their Lord in the Sacrament of His Love. The Christmas of 1919 marked the seventy-fifth anniversary of their uninterrupted nocturnal vigils. In anticipation of that joyous event, Mother Emma had written to the Sisters:

> Christmas it is 75 years (the diamond jubilee, therefore) since our community in America held night hours of adoration for the first time. Although there have been many changes that time and circumstances necessarily bring with them, these hours, thank God, have never been interrupted, and I hope that this grace, this special privilege, will never be withdrawn from our Congregation. But we must also contribute our share thereto by fervor and by the punctual observance of the holy Rule.[1]

Mother Emma was not satisfied, however, with perpetual adoration alone; it had been her fond dream for years that the fidelity of the Sisters would eventually win for them the unique privilege of perpetual exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

From the earliest days in America the community had enjoyed the privilege of frequent exposition of the Blessed Sacrament throughout the year. Later, further concessions were made in this regard by the ordinary. Beginning in 1914 the Blessed Sacrament was exposed during the three days and nights preceding Lent (the so-called carnival days) as an act of reparation for the sins committed during that season, and also from the eve of the feast of the Sacred Heart until its close, with the same object in view.[2] During the three days before the feast of the Assumption in 1915, the centenary of the foundation of the Congregation of the Precious Blood by Blessed Gaspar del Bufalo, a special grant of exposition was made.[3] Beginning in August, 1917, the Blessed Sacrament was exposed every First Friday for the duration of World War I,[4] and later this permission was extended to each Friday and Sunday of the year.[5]

These were glorious privileges, indeed, but Mother Emma would not be satisfied until her desire of having the Blessed Sacrament perpetually exposed was fulfilled. To this end she had bent all her efforts, especially during the last years of her generalship, to erect a Eucharistic throne, the best that lay in her power. But it was left to her successor, Mother Agreda, to realize the fulfillment of that dream.

Archbishop Moeller died rather suddenly on January 6, 1925.[6] In him the Sisters mourned the loss of a staunch friend and wise counselor. The Holy See named Bishop Joseph Chartrand of Indianapolis his successor the following May. Both the clergy and people of the Cincinnati diocese rejoiced at the prospect of having this well-loved prelate as their ordinary. But an appeal to keep their beloved bishop was made to Rome by the priests and laity of the diocese of Indianapolis with the result that Bishop John T. McNicholas of Duluth, a Dominican, was appointed to Cincinnati.[7]

The Sisters of the Precious Blood soon learned that they had a sincere friend in the new archbishop. He at once showed deep concern about the spiritual welfare of the religious communities under his charge and a ready interest in any project designed to promote that welfare. Not only was he in entire sympathy with Mother Agreda's proposal to inaugurate perpetual exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at the motherhouse, but he promised to give his full sanction as soon as the altar of exposition was duly adapted for the purpose.

There had been much controversy between the superiors at the motherhouse and Father August, who was still chaplain and spiritual director of the Sisters, as to the proper altar for exposing the Blessed Sacrament. Father August maintained that it was the practice of the Church to have an altar reserved especially for perpetual exposition and tried to prevail upon Mother Emma to prepare one of the side chapels for that purpose. Mother Emma pointed out that their main purpose in building at Dayton had been to share the privilege of perpetual exposition with the faithful. Not even all the members of the resident community could find place in one of the small chapels, let alone outsiders who wished to make visits or attend services. Nevertheless, she went ahead and had the sanctuary of the small chapel on the novitiate side decorated with symbols and inscriptions appropriate for an exposition chapel.

Archbishop McNicholas finally gave his permission to have the Blessed Sacrament exposed on the main altar at all times except during the celebration of Holy Mass and on the several days during Holy Week when the liturgy of the Church forbids it. The solemn opening of perpetual exposition was observed on May 12, 1926, with a high Mass sung by the congregation.[8] Especially touching and appropriate was the hymn of welcome after the Offertory, *Veni, Domine Jesu.* The solemn moment of exposition of the Blessed Sacrament was followed by a hymn of adoration, *Adoro te, O panis coelice.* All were deeply impressed by the significance of the ceremony that ushered in the Eucharistic reign of Jesus, no longer enclosed in the tabernacle, but enthroned on the altar amid lights and flowers where henceforth anyone could behold Him at all hours of the day and night.

Father August Seifert did not remain long at the motherhouse after this. His opinion had not carried and he therefore asked to resign. In his parting address to the Sisters he reiter-

Chapel of Perpetual Exposition, Salem Heights, Dayton, Ohio

ated his reasons for the stand which he had taken on the question of exposition. Anyone who knew Father August also knew that once he had taken a stand on anything he was adamant. He could not and he would not act against his own convictions, which, according to his prediction, would be proved on judgment day to have been right.[9]

During the summer of 1926, Father Isidore Oberhauser was appointed temporary chaplain at the motherhouse. In September, Father Alexius Schuette, who had been serving at St. Joseph's Orphanage the previous year, became the resident chaplain and professor of religion and Latin. In him the Sisters found a truly spiritual man, wholly devoted to directing those under his charge along the path of religious perfection.

Another innovation during the early years of Mother Agreda's tenure of office was a change in the habit. Mother Brunner, and later Father Brunner, had stipulated that the Sisters' habit be wholly of black to symbolize their complete detachment from the world.[10] It remained black until 1906, when some of the Sisters for reasons of health began to request the use of something white in their habit.[11] At first only a small white piping above the black collar was allowed. Several years later, at the suggestion of Archbishop Moeller, a white collar was permitted. The archbishop intimated that he was voicing the sentiments of a number of the Sisters when he wrote: "A little white added to the somber dark color of the habit would give it an air of cheerfulness, especially necessary in the schoolroom."[12]

As superioress of the Kneipp Sanitarium, Mother Agreda had received permission to have the resident Sisters, a number of whom were nurses, wear white linen coifs instead of black ones. It was not surprising, therefore, that when she became Mother General the custom of wearing white coifs and white veil caps was extended to the whole Congregation. White veils replaced the black bonnets hitherto worn by the novices. In 1928 Archbishop McNicholas suggested that some bit of red be added to the habit to symbolize the Precious Blood. A red cincture was substituted for the black belt and a red cross string for the black one. The habit as it now appears is usually adjudged neat, distinctive, practical, and sanitary.

An attractive habit may be the deciding factor in a girl's choice of this sisterhood or that; but vocations to the Congregation of the Precious Blood were not multiplying. And there was greater need of more members than ever if the Sisters were to carry on the various activities they had recently undertaken. Archbishop McNicholas sensed the true cause of the dearth of vocations which was general throughout the country. In a community conference held at the motherhouse in August, 1927, he urged the Sisters to open a juniorate which would admit graduates from the grammar school and train them from an impressionable age in the principles of the spiritual life. His contention was that many vocations are lost during the years of high school, when the allurements of the world become more enticing to youth, and dangers to morals increase. With many Catholic students attending public high schools, the odds against nurturing religious vocations are even greater.[13]

In September 1927, the first four aspirants were admitted, special apartments having been set aside for them. Few restrictions beyond those that regulate any well-conducted boarding school were made. The aspirants were present at some of the community exercises in the chapel and attended classes with the novices and postulants. Thus there were sufficient contacts to acquaint them with the religious life and to aid them in deciding their vocation. By the end of February 1928, all four asked to be admitted and were received as postulants. The juniorate proved its worth and became an integral part of the life of the institute.

Circumstances brought about a change in the teacher-training department at the motherhouse about this time. In 1928,[14] the two-year normal course, that for eight years had been given at the motherhouse with the approval of the state, was discontinued in favor of a diocesan normal school established in connection with Xavier College, Cincinnati. Thence-

Mother Mary Agreda, 1924-1936

forth, students preparing to teach the elementary grades had to follow the two-year curriculum offered there.[15]

There are many advantages in a centralized normal school in the diocese instead of several small ones maintained by the individual communities. Better equipment, more thoroughly trained teachers who are specialists in a given field, and a unified method of instruction are but a few of the advantages offered by the larger school. Moreover, the wholesome contacts made between members of different Orders tend to stimulate thought, to foster exchange of ideas, and to encourage healthy emulation. Such contacts become potent factors in breaking down provincialism and unfriendly rivalry.

There were also disadvantages arising from the removal of the normal schools from the novitiates. To the Sisters of the Precious Blood it presented a real problem. Novices and postulants who had been graduated from high school were thus barred from taking accredited college courses, since they were required by Rule to reside in the novitiate. In 1932, therefore, an attempt was made to open a junior college at the motherhouse. But the state would not recognize a college with an enrollment under sixty.[16] Finally a concession was granted by Monsignor Carl Ryan, diocesan superintendent of schools, whereby certain courses, including English, biology, religion, introduction to history, and principles of education could be offered with credit at the motherhouse as extension work of the Athenaeum of Ohio, which had meanwhile taken the diocesan normal out of the hands of Xavier University.[17] After their profession, young prospective teachers could then be sent to Cincinnati to finish their normal course leading to an elementary certificate, or if preparing to teach in the secondary field, to higher institutions of learning.

For almost twenty years Sister Angeline had been directress of education in the community. She had seen the schools develop under her guidance into a well organized system from kindergarten to teachers' training school. She herself had been by the force of her example and personality an inspiration to many young Sisters who were entering the teaching field for the first time. Her duties as secretary general, to which office she was elected in 1930, rendered it necessary for her to lay down the burden of the schools. In her stead Sister Rosalie Alt was named directress.[18] Sister Angeline's trust in divine aid, which was doubtless the secret of her success, and her willingness to resign her charge to another once the will of God was made manifest, are revealed by a significant entry in her private journal under date of September 1930: "Thank you, dear Jesus, for taking the burden from my shoulders. Help Sr. R. as You always helped me!"[19]

Sister Rosalie, to whose untiring efforts much of the educational advancement in the Congregation was due, did not long retain her office as directress of schools. A slow consumption from which she had been suffering for years forced her to give up active work entirely. In February 1933, she retired to the old motherhouse at Maria Stein, where she died suddenly from a hemorrhage a year and a half later, October 13, 1934.[20]

One cannot easily forget a person like Sister Rosalie. Delicacy of feeling, kindness of heart, refinement of manner, sum up the outstanding traits of her character. By her sympathetic interest in others, and above all, by her example, she led many souls to Christ. Not a few Sisters, some of them grown old in service, are proud to call themselves Sister Rosalie's postulants, for it was partly to her influence that they owe their vocation. Each year since her death, when her former pupils of novitiate days return to the motherhouse, they love to resort to her classroom, where her spirit seems to hover still, and to read in her own handwriting on the blackboard her parting words to the novices: "God bless you! Be good, humble, and obedient! Remember we have only one *True Friend*." They recall other words of hers — words of advice, of encouragement, of uplift — that echo and re-echo from the past, and they thank God that some time or other in their life they were fortunate enough to come under the influence of such an inspirational teacher as Sister Rosalie.

Sister Simplicia McGreevy, the present directress of schools, was appointed to fill out Sister Rosalie's term of office. Like her predecessors, she has endeavored to keep the educational standards in the Congregation high. Nearly all the school Sisters in her charge, having met the requirements of diocese and state, are properly certified teachers.[21]

A new type of activity that has flourished under her direction is teaching in vacation schools, which have recently become widespread in the country. The first vacation school conducted by the Sisters of the Precious Blood was at Mount Carmel, near Batavia, Ohio. It was opened on July 5, 1932, at the request of Father Edward Stuhlmueller, pastor of Holy Trinity Church. Sister Basildis Spegele and Sister Palma Hafner were appointed to conduct classes in the two large, pleasant rooms of the German Community Hall. Besides instructions in the catechism and Bible history, lessons in elocution, singing, music appreciation, and construction work filled the busy morning hours daily, except on Saturdays and Sundays. The fact that the children were eager to learn and the parents willing to co-operate made the work, despite the heat, a joyous task indeed. Moreover, the kindness and hospitality of the Sisters' hosts, Mr. and Mrs. Michael Wiener, an aged couple who lived near the community hall, helped to make their stay at the mission more pleasant. Toward the end of the term an interesting program of songs and speeches was given for the enjoyment of the parents. On Sunday, August 7, eighteen of the children received their First Holy Communion.[22]

The following summer the vacation school was opened at Batavia, which is more centrally located. Two large buses chartered by the parish brought the children each morning from Mount Carmel, Afton, and the neighboring district. A plan of instruction similar to that of the preceding summer was followed, culminating on July 30 with the reception of First Communion by a class of twenty-seven.

Beginning in September, 1933, the Sisters held instruction classes each Sunday, primarily to prepare the children for the sacrament of Confirmation, which was administered to a class of seventy-six at Batavia on November 10.[23]

In 1934 the enrollment of the vacation school increased to such an extent that a third teacher was engaged. An added feature that summer was a school picnic held the day following the reception of First Holy Communion on August 26. The Sunday-school classes continued that year, and the vacation school through the summer of 1935.[24]

Since 1932 the number of vacation schools conducted by the Sisters of the Precious Blood in various sections of the country has steadily increased. There is no dearth of volunteers to engage in this arduous work, which must be carried out in some localities under the most trying circumstances. Every year glowing accounts reach the motherhouse — from Escondido, Vista, Carlsbad, Pala, and Oceanside, in California; from the Government Indian School, Ray, Sonora, Alhambra, Superior, Mesa, and various other missions in and about Phoenix, Arizona; from Sedalia, Cole Camp, Gravois Mills, and the Ozarks in Missouri; from Dayton, "The Bend," Marydale, Glynwood, and Rockford, in Ohio — wherever these missionaries are carrying out the mandate of Christ, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me." These reports tell of real adventures, of humorous situations, of consoling conversions, and reveal the spirit of sacrifice and zeal that animates the Sisters who are privileged to devote themselves to these schools.[25]

An extract from one of the letters will give the general attitude of the Sisters toward this type of mission work:

> Sister Simplicia, we have thoroughly enjoyed every minute and every experience in this mission field. We hope that the seed which we have broadcast may bring forth a hundredfold harvest. We trust that we have brought many souls closer to God, and that they may all be better for the efforts we have made, although they are all too feeble. Moreover, we feel improved physically, mentally, and spiritually for all our labors and adventures.

> Permit us to make one suggestion. If you and Rev. Mother ever take up foreign mission work in the jungles of Africa, the burning wilds of India, or the war-torn plains of China, please reserve us for Ray, Arizona, as this place is wild and woolly enough for us.[26]

During the year 1927-28 several large building projects launched by the Congregation were in progress. A diocesan high school for girls was being erected in Norwood, Ohio, and a new boarding school at San Luis Rey Mission in California.

Before his death Archbishop Moeller had inaugurated a plan for meeting the needs of Catholic secondary education in the diocese. The practice of having small high schools maintained by individual parishes was to give way in cities to the central high school system. Modern high schools were to be erected and equipped by the diocese or by various teaching Orders at their own expense, and each school was to be supported by assessments on the parishes comprised in the district in which a central high school was located. Thus educational facilities offered to Catholic youth would compare favorably with those of the best public institutions and would be an incentive for parents to keep their growing boys and girls under Catholic influence.[27]

Archbishop Moeller did not live to see his plans materialize. In the design of Providence they were to be elaborated and put into effect by Archbishop McNicholas, to whom the cause of Catholic secondary education was no less dear.

It was at first rumored that the Sisters of the Precious Blood were to build a central high school in Dayton, where for many years they had been conducting an approved high school in St. Mary's parish, one of the largest in the city. The rumor was unfounded. They received word from Archbishop McNicholas that they were to erect a high school in Cincinnati to take care of the parishes in the northwest section, in the vicinity of Norwood.

Various locations for the building were contemplated: a plot near St. Mark's Church in Evanston, where the Sisters had property and where they were already conducting a high school attended by students from several neighboring parishes; a beautiful eminence on Walnut Hills along Victory Boulevard on the present site of Walnut Hills High School. But the location upon which they had set their heart was a vacant lot belonging to the diocese, situated on the corner of Fenwick Avenue and Quatman Street in Norwood, opposite Mount St. Mary Seminary. When Mother Agreda requested Archbishop McNicholas to sell her the property, he absolutely refused. She was not disturbed. With her usual equanimity she went home and asked the Sisters to pray that the archbishop would relent. Prayer won the day. Without further solicitation on the part of the Sisters, Archbishop McNicholas finally offered to deed them the land. In the fall of 1927 the wooded area was cleared and ground broken for the proposed building.[28]

The Sisters, alive to the requirements of a modern, well-arranged school as well as to their own peculiar needs, anticipated the architects by drawing up plans of their own. These were followed out in the main on the blueprints. Archbishop McNicholas had stipulated only that the buildings harmonize in color and style of architecture with Mount St. Mary Seminary and the episcopal residence across the way. The completed building was to be of buff brick trimmed with Indiana limestone, built in the late Italian Renaissance style. It was to measure 260 feet across the front and be flanked by two wings: the one to contain a large gymnasium-auditorium, the other to serve as a residence for the teaching Sisters. The school would accommodate about 500 students.[29]

When the cornerstone was laid on April 25, 1928, there was little hope that the building would be ready for the opening of school in the fall. But work went ahead so rapidly that the Sisters ventured to set a tentative date for registration early in September. Throughout the summer months Sister

Grace Pratt, who had been appointed principal of the new high school, and Sister Magna Lehman were busily enrolling students in the different parishes of the school district, which included Sts. Peter and Paul, St. Matthew, and St. Elizabeth, Norwood; St. John, Deer Park; St. Mark, Evanston; Nativity, Pleasant Ridge; St. Agnes and St. Aloysius Orphanage, Bond Hill; Assumption and Our Lady of Carmel, Walnut Hills. In all, about 250 pupils were registered and fifteen teachers, including two priests and four lay women, were engaged on the staff.

Though the building was far from complete, classes were scheduled to begin on October 1. On the previous Monday, a bitter cold day, the Sisters met the students in front of the building to take orders for books and to impart any desired information. Informal groups of brightly clad girls and somberly dressed nuns chatted and shivered in the frosty morning air, while inside the building busy workmen sawed and planed, hammered and drilled, in a mad endeavor to have a sufficient number of rooms ready to admit the students the following week.

During the first few months both teachers and students had to put up with many inconveniences. Crowding into the few finished rooms, stepping high over piles of débris, carrying lunches, and disposing of wraps and books in every conceivable corner were but a few of the novelties offered to the pioneers. Nevertheless, classes went on merrily; everybody was in good spirits. Gradually desks were fastened, lockers placed, linoleum and flooring laid, and the cafeteria was opened. In due time everything was in good running order and a normal school life began.

Until their residence was completed, the Sisters stayed at Mount St. Mary Seminary. By the last of October they were able to move into their new home, although the convent chapel was not ready for use until spring. On October 28, the feast of Christ the King, Holy Mass was celebrated for the first time in the school oratory, after it had been blessed by Monsignor

Louis Nau, the rector of the seminary. Here the Sisters attended Mass daily until their own chapel was opened the following March.[30]

On November 24, a bazaar was held for the benefit of the school through the aid of the Knights of Columbus and various parish units under the general chairmanship of Mr. John J. Klenke. The new building, including the property, represented the sum of $600,000. Parents of the students were willing to help the Sisters meet the enormous debt.

November 25 was the date set for the dedication of the school. Archbishop McNicholas dedicated the building to the honor of the Queen of Heaven (*Regina Coeli*); it was already known as the Regina High School. In his address on this occasion he said in part:

> With the recent completion of additional high school facilities for boys and girls, the archdiocese of Cincinnati ranks with any in the country from the standpoint of educational accommodations for its youth. The laity, through whose generous support the parish contributions are made possible, have co-operated nobly in every project of an educational nature in the archdiocese.[31]

A civic celebration followed the religious rite. This consisted of a flag-raising ceremony in front of the school, where a flagpole had been erected through the generosity of the Norwood Council of the Knights of Columbus. The Honorable Harry H. Baker, mayor of Norwood, gave the address.[32] A bronze plaque on the base of the flagpole commemorates the event.

For several months prior to the dedication Mother Agreda remained at Regina, helping to prepare articles for the booths of the forthcoming bazaar and personally supervising the furnishing of the Sisters' new home. She was concerned that the residence of the teachers be comfortable and convenient while in keeping with religious poverty and simplicity. Ample room was provided not only for the high school faculty but also for the Sisters teaching at the local parish school, Sts. Peter and Paul. The Sisters of Charity, who had taught here the year before and were obliged to live in the school for want of other quarters, exchanged this school for St. Rose's in the east end of Cincinnati, which had been conducted for many years by the Sisters of the Precious Blood.

On March 9, the Sisters' chapel was dedicated. Nearly all the appointments in the chapel were gifts of friends to Mother Agreda in honor of her ruby jubilee. Especially significant were the red and gold hangings of Italian frieze adorning the sanctuary walls and confessional. The sacred vessels, altar linens, candlesticks, and other articles were so many tokens of the love and esteem in which Mother Agreda was held by those with whom she had had business dealings. With the completion of the chapel and the landscaping of the grounds that spring Regina High School had advanced beyond its pioneer stage.[33]

The detailed story of the progress of the high school during the fifteen years of its existence would require a separate volume. Year after year Regina has sent forth scores of graduates into the busy walks of life or into the quiet seclusion of the cloister. Most of them have been a credit to their Alma Mater; some of them have made her proud. For all of them she tried to do her best. In a word, she has always endeavored to meet the challenge flung at her years ago by one of the faculty members:

"Fling wide thy portals, Regina, and let in youth,
That seeketh learning, inspiration, fame;
Receive it kindly. Thy cornerstone is truth,
Which, stamped with seal divine, is e'er the same.
Thy walls of living faith youth's rampart be
Against its deadly foes — deceit and sin;
Thy shelt'ring roof of God's own charity
Protect it from wild passion's storm and din.
Pour forth thy treasures, hoarded as precious gold —
The lore of saint and sage, grace, music, art —

Imbue it with the spirit that of old
To martyrs strength and courage did impart.
Fling wide thy portals, Regina, and send forth youth,
A messenger of faith and love and truth."[34]

While the Regina High School was being erected in Norwood, Mother Emma was directing the building of a new academy at San Luis Rey, California. The last addition to the original buildings, a frame house for boys, had been erected in 1917. By 1927 the adobe walls of the older buildings were crumbling from frequent rains, and the roof above the dining room leaked so badly that "the Sisters held an umbrella while eating." Besides, since the number of boarders had increased to ninety and the dormitories were overcrowded, a new building was imperative. Mother Agreda and her council decided to erect a new academy in the style of the old San Luis Rey mission architecture but equipped in every respect according to the latest standards of convenience and comfort.

Ten additional acres of land were bought from Mrs. Van Kilsdonk, and plans for a modern boarding school, complete in a single unit, were drawn up. By September, 1928, the building was ready to admit a much larger number of children than could have been accommodated before. Solemn dedication of the school to the Little Flower took place on November 21, the feast of the Presentation. A statue of St. Thérèse stands in front of the white building.[35]

Since 1928, San Luis Rey Academy has prospered. It has attracted pupils from other states in the Southwest and has supplied the motherhouse in Ohio as well as other communities in California with a number of vocations. Recently, for various reasons, girls only, from the first grade through high school, have been enrolled. Boys who were formerly permitted to attend through the eighth grade are directed to schools conducted for boys only.

Another major undertaking during Mother Agreda's first term of office was the completion of the Maria-Joseph Home

Regina High School, Norwood, Ohio

Little Flower Academy, San Luis Rey, California

for the Aged on Salem Avenue, Dayton, near the new motherhouse. The plan to build a home to accommodate aged couples or other persons with means who wished to spend their declining years under the care of religious was inaugurated already in 1921 by a group of Dayton women. Archbishop Moeller having given his hearty approval to their suggestion, they asked the Sisters of the Precious Blood to assume the responsibility of erecting and managing the home. A committee of women, including Miss Eva Devanney, Mrs. Frank A. Hahne, Mrs. John Westendorf, and Mrs. John R. Glynn, pledged themselves to co-operate in raising funds for the proposed building.[36]

The plans called for a large towerlike structure in the center, with wings radiating therefrom like the spokes of a wheel. Such an arrangement provides for an abundance of sunlight and air, so necessary for the cheer and comfort of old age. Only the front wings were to be erected at first; the others, as funds became available.[37]

It was several years before actual building operations could begin. In October, 1929, the cornerstone was laid. In his address on this occasion Archbishop McNicholas especially commended "the interest, good will, and generosity of those not of our Faith."[38] The fact that the institute was to be nonsectarian had created widespread interest in the new venture. Contributions were made by persons of other creeds also.

The opening of the home with a fall festival held on September 21, 1930, attracted at least 10,000 people to the grounds. This event, while netting a sum of $2,000, served also as a good advertisement of the home. Reservations were soon made, and in a short time the house was filled to its capacity. Holy Mass was celebrated for the first time in the temporary chapel on October 11, by Father Benedict Boebner, who was appointed resident chaplain of the new institution. Sister Philippine Foltz was the first directress.[39]

What was designed as a temporary chapel is still in use, and no other units have been added to the original building save a small outside oratory dedicated to St. Thérèse of Lisieux. The depression in the early thirties and the subsequent lack of funds have rendered further progress on the building impossible.

While broadening their field of activity in different directions, the Sisters continued to give an honored place among their varied occupations to administering to the temporal needs of priests and students. In 1926 they answered the call of Archbishop McNicholas to take over the management of the domestic work at Mount St. Mary Seminary. Sister Irma was sent from St. Gregory's to the major seminary to direct the little community of ten Sisters newly missioned there. In 1931, when the new Brunnerdale Novitiate was opened in its beautiful scenic setting near Canton, Ohio, the Fathers of the Precious Blood invited the Sisters to take charge of the domestic department. Sister Semina Lauter, with four other Sisters, made the start there.[40]

In September of the same year, Monsignor Urban J. Vehr, who had enjoyed the Sisters' services at St. Gregory's and Mount St. Mary's in Cincinnati, requested Mother Agreda for several Sisters to take over the management of his household when he was made Bishop of Denver, Colorado. In appreciation of the "splendid and untiring service" which he had rendered to the community as ecclesiastical superior of religious communities in the archdiocese of Cincinnati, Mother Agreda willingly acceded to his wishes. She herself accompanied the three Sisters destined for this mission, arriving in Denver on September 8. They were welcomed at the bishop's residence, 1536 Logan Street, which at that time also held the chancery office. A year later when Bishop Vehr moved into the beautiful home on Pearl Street presented to him by a wealthy Catholic family of Denver, the house on Logan Street came to be used exclusively as the chancery building. This new residence has been since that time the scene of the Sisters' labors in Denver.[41]

Mother Ludovica lived to see most of the developments that took place in the Congregation during the twenties: the transfer of the motherhouse to Dayton, changes in the habit, new projects undreamed of a decade before. She had eventu-

Maria-Joseph Home for the Aged, Dayton, Ohio

ally become resigned even to the change that had caused her the greatest concern — the removal of the central house to the city. After she had seen with her own eyes that the tradition of cloistral simplicity was not violated in the building of the new motherhouse, she was satisfied.

Relieved of all responsibility of office, she spent her last years at Maria Stein in quiet contentment, though never wholly free from pain caused by her physical deformity and bronchial condition.

For some months prior to her death she had been visibly failing; yet the end came rather unexpectedly. The evening before, she took her supper at the small table in her room as usual, and retired. It was the eve of Our Lady of Guadalupe, December 11, 1929. During the night she became so weak that the attendant nurse called for the chaplain to administer the Last Sacraments. A hurried telephone call early the next morning brought Mother Agreda and Mother Emma from Dayton to spend the last hour at her bedside. About 4:30 in the afternoon she peacefully slept away.

The large funeral attendance indicated into how many hearts Mother Ludovica had won her way. Priests, seminarians — who formed the choir — Sisters from outlying missions, as well as lay folk, all attested to the love and esteem in which they held her who had been such a shining example of "a saintly, penitential life."[42]

And yet there was nothing rigid or unappealing in her sanctity. She was as kind to others as she was severe with herself. Many of the older Sisters bear witness to the consideration she used to show them, especially when they were ill. This maternal solicitude is revealed in a letter to Sister Victoria, who was sick at the time in a Fort Wayne hospital:

> I think of you day and night, often amid tears, for I must constantly hear that Sister Victoria is not much better. Then I say to our dear Lord, "O loving Jesus, give me a drop of her suffering and spare her to us a while longer." Do you also, dear Sister, acquiesce in this offering for your

> recovery in accordance with God's will for the welfare of the Congregation.

Her kindly concern was not limited to a few, but extended to all the Sisters, as further remarks in the same letter prove:

> Let us hope that all the Sisters will make a good spiritual renewal. Pray for them. If only we had more space to make it pleasanter for them. Many of them are in need of a good rest and building-up. May God in His goodness supply what we are unable to give them so that strengthened and cheered they will be able to return to their arduous work on the missions.[43]

Mother Ludovica will not be soon forgotten. Her kind looks, encouraging words, and understanding heart engraved her memory more deeply and lastingly on human souls than the most flattering epitaph on enduring granite could have done. Priests who knew her pronounce her name reverently, refer to her as "saintly Mother Ludovica," and are unstinting in the praise of her virtues. Sisters who had been under her charge attest that she was more than a mother to them. She is pointed out as a model for the younger members, who are encouraged to perpetuate her spirit by endeavoring to emulate her virtues.

Chapter VIII

JUBILEE JOYS AND SORROWS

MOTHER AGREDA'S re-election to the office of Superior General in 1930 brought with it the responsibility to commemorate in a worthy manner the hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Precious Blood, which was to be observed in the year 1934. Several projects, remote preparations for the centennial, were already afoot, and as time went on, other plans suggested themselves to Mother Agreda — at first, vague outlines which became more definite as the possibility of their fulfillment became more certain. What this calm, level-headed woman really had in mind few could surmise, but all were of the opinion that she would accomplish whatever she set out to do.

In the first place, important changes were being made in the internal government of the Congregation. Since 1887, when the Rules and Constitution of the community were drawn up and formally approved by Archbishop Elder, the status of the Congregation continued to be that of a diocesan religious institute. At the suggestion and with the encouragement of Archbishop McNicholas efforts were made to raise its status to that of a pontifical institute by obtaining the approbation of the Holy See on the Constitution.

As early as 1927 a revision of the Rules and Constitution was begun by a commission of three outstanding members of the council: Mother Emma, Sister Victoria, and Sister Angeline.[1] It became necessary to recast the old Constitution in order to make it conform in all points to the new Code of Canon Law before it could be presented in Rome for papal approbation. Most of the changes pertained to the mode of electing officers. Mimeographed copies of the first draft were made and distributed to the Sisters for trial observance. Several revisions were required before the stamp of papal approval was placed upon the final draft.[2]

Besides the new Constitution a Book of Customs was drawn up for the first time in the history of the Congregation. While many time-honored traditions had been kept up and were held sacred in the community, they had never before been committed to writing. In 1933, a hektographed copy of the Book of Customs was sent to each house so that the practicability of the articles could be tested and objections presented before the final revision was made.[3]

A third new community book was placed in the hands of the Sisters at this time: the *Manual of the Sisters of the Precious Blood,* containing the English version of many prayers that had been prayed in the Congregation since its beginning. Some were omitted, others added, and the new collection appeared in printed form for the first time in 1932.[4]

The following year, 1933, turned out to be an eventful year for the Congregation of the Precious Blood. The Jubilee year of Our Lord's Passion and death, it was also a year of immediate preparation for the centenary observance. Just one hundred years before, Mother Brunner had spent the greater part of the Jubilee year, 1833, in Rome, preparatory to beginning the little community at Loewenberg. In this Jubilee year, 1933, Mother Agreda determined to go, not only to Rome to make the Jubilee visits, but on to Switzerland and bring back to America the remains of the saintly foundress as a Jubilee gift to the Congregation.

With good wishes and promises of prayer on the part of the Sisters and with the approval and blessing of Archbishop McNicholas, Mother Agreda and her two companions, Sister Adelaide Walz and Sister Coelina Schick, left for New York, where on Saturday, September 16, they boarded the *Rex*. As the great Italian liner steamed out of harbor, a windstorm was raging, which, continuing throughout the night and the next day, rendered impossible the offering of the Holy Sacrifice on board. Sunday evening a hurricane broke with all its fury, preluding an electrical storm with a thrilling display of lightning and thunder.[5] Several days later there was again an unusual swaying of the vessel, due this time to the Spanish gulf stream, which at the season of the equinox sometimes rises to the surface.

Their first stop was near the port of Gibraltar, but since it was nightfall when they arrived, they could discern little more through the darkness than the lights "quivering like glowworms" on the sides of the mountains.[6] The next day at sunrise they caught a glimpse of the coast of Spain, which was fast receding from view as the *Rex* plowed on through the waters of the Mediterranean.

When they finally landed in Naples on September 23, Mount Vesuvius, which had been active for several months, was putting on a show. Clouds of black smoke hung thick over the volcano, while volumes of steam and streams of red-hot lava, discernible even in the daytime, were being belched forth from its depths. In Naples they entrained for Rome, where they arrived that night, happy to be welcomed by two friendly Franciscan Missionaries of Mary who had come to the station to meet them. Mother Agreda had arranged to stay at the motherhouse of that community during their visit in the Eternal City. There they were cordially received by the Roman Sisters, one of them, a native of New York, acting as their interpreter.

Their first morning in Rome held for them a unique experience. They were privileged to attend a Mass offered by Bishop Rueys of the Greek Lithuanian Rite and to receive Holy Communion under both species. For the first time in their lives they drank the Precious Blood under the appearance of wine! The rest of that morning, which turned out with fine weather after a spell of heavy rains and floods, they spent in visiting several nearby places of interest, among them the basilica of St. John Lateran. Map in hand, they made their way on foot like veteran sightseers. By noon they were glad enough to return for lunch and siesta. After tea they were shown through the art rooms of the community, which makes extensive use of art in its missionary activities. In the evening, night prayers and Benediction in the chapel were followed by dinner served Italian style. The three visiting Sisters were put under the special charge of a Mother from Switzerland, a most delightful person who spoke a jargon of German, French, Italian, and Spanish. From the very first night they loved her.[7]

Having rested for a day in the solitude of the cloister, the American trio set out, September 26, on an extensive sightseeing tour under the competent guidance of Father Louis G. Reinhold of Cincinnati, who was studying in Rome at the time. Among other places, they visited the house of the Fathers of the Precious Blood in the Via Poli, where they met two Americans, Father Francis Beuke and Father Joseph Schaeper, Mother Emma's trusty guide about Rome thirty years before. Kneeling at the tomb of Blessed Gaspar in the church of Santa Maria in Trivio, the Sisters offered "fervent prayers for all the community."

More sure of themselves, the travelers ventured out alone during the next two days to make the Jubilee visits at the designated basilicas, St. John Lateran and Santa Maria Maggiori, and to take in many other sights of Rome, too numerous to mention here.[8]

On St. Michael's feast, September 29, they were at St. Peter's at an early hour to meet Father Reinhold, who offered Mass for their intentions and gave them Holy Communion. Words fail to express the impressions they received of this greatest basilica in all Christendom, with its historic monuments and hallowed associations. In St. Peter's the Sisters made their third set of Jubilee visits before wending their way back to the Franciscan house on the Via Giusti. The next day, after visiting the catacombs with Father Reinhold again acting as guide, the pilgrims directed their steps westward to the basilica of St. Paul, outside the walls of Rome, where they made another set of Jubilee visits.[9]

The chief event of October 1 was an audience with Cardinal Luigi Sincero, the Cardinal Protector of the Congregation of the Precious Blood, to whom they were presented by Father Reinhold. His Eminence spoke English well. When Mother Agreda revealed to him their desire to procure the remains of Mother Brunner for veneration at the American motherhouse, he encouraged them in their quest and wrote a letter of recommendation to the Bishop of Chur. He promised, moreover, to lay their affairs before the Sacred Congregation.

Since they were awaiting an appointment for an audience with the Holy Father, Mother Agreda thought it wise to venture out only on minor excursions during the next few days. The feast of St. Francis, October 4, the patronal feast of the Franciscans, they celebrated with the community. On October 5, they went with Father Reinhold to the exchange to make arrangements for their departure from Rome. That evening the announcement of their audience with the Holy Father, which was set for 12:30 the next day, was placed in Mother Agreda's hands, filling her and her companions with joyous anticipation.[10]

Early the following morning they went directly to St. Peter's to fulfill the conditions of confession and Communion for gaining the indulgences of their final Jubilee visits. A few hours later they entered the Vatican through the Piazza St. Damaso, and finding their way past guards and attendants of every description, finally reached "with beating hearts" the antechamber of the audience room.

> How our hearts were thrilled to hear the voice of the Holy Father in the next room — a few moments more and HE stood before us. We were on our knees and he moved from one to the other, and as he gave his hand to us we kissed his ring. He spoke very kindly in German, saying that he included in his blessing all our intentions, the intentions of our community, all our members, all our friends and relatives, and our work as religious. Then he gave us each his hand again, saying to Mother if there was anything she wished him to do to write it to him, since the time was

> short and many thousands of pilgrims were waiting to see him. His last words were *"Auf Wiedersehen in Himmel"* ["Farewell till we meet in heaven"].[11]

The climax of their visit to Rome having been reached in their audience with Pius XI, the travelers were eager to be off for Switzerland to accomplish the main purpose of their trip abroad. Leaving Rome on Monday, October 9, they went by train to Assisi, which was included in their itinerary. There they were, in true Italian fashion, fairly tumbled off the train, baggage and all. Assisi, hallowed by its association with the lives of St. Francis and St. Clare, held a special fascination for them. By evening of the same day they had visited most of the shrines that make this little mountain town famous.[12]

The travelers had planned to take an early train the next morning in order that their journey through the Alpine country, with its imposing mountain scenery, could be made by daylight. But they missed that train and were forced to wait several hours for the next. Finally, after changing trains four times, they arrived in Zurich, only to find that the lady with whom they were intending to stay had moved some months before. Undismayed and calm as usual, Mother Agreda reached the quick decision to cross over the Bodensee to Friedrichshafen and from there to attend to some business in Germany. That done, they took a direct route to Schellenberg in Liechtenstein where, in the convent of the Sisters of the Precious Blood, they immediately felt at home. There, among the most beautiful surroundings that they had yet come across, they found rest from their strenuous travels. The mountains covered with pine forests were already decked with snow, "all dressed up," the Schellenberg Sisters said, "for the benefit of their visitors."[13]

One of the objects of Mother Agreda's visit to Europe was to renew relations with the convent at Schellenberg, and if the resident Sisters were willing, to re-establish it as a filial house of the American province. While some of them showed an inclination toward a reunion, the matter was too important to decide during Mother Agreda's short stay there. Besides, the affair had to be laid before the Bishop of Chur and fully deliberated before a final decision could be reached. Three months later, after Mother Agreda had returned to the States, the answer came. All circumstances having been considered during two sittings of the diocesan council, Bishop Vincenz of Chur and the members of his advisory board, together with the Sisters at Schellenberg, agreed that reunion with the American province, as far as temporalities were concerned, was inadvisable, and that the issue was to be closed *in perpetuum*. However, the Sisters were willing that the spiritual relationship that had always existed between the two provinces remain indissoluble, as the following extract from Sister Veronica's letter plainly shows:

> Let us therefore acquiesce in this judicial separation of our material interests. Let us instead be inseparably united in true sisterly love and fervent prayer. Nothing, on that account, hinders us from continuing our mutual participation in prayer for the deceased Sisters, a practice which we have hitherto fostered. We also wish through fervent prayer to support each other's undertakings. Even now, as up to the present time, you are cordially invited to enjoy our hospitality on the occasion of a trip to Europe. We only ask definitely that you do not raise again the question of reunion.[14]

But to return to Schellenberg, where Mother Agreda and her two Sisters were anxiously awaiting an appointment with the Bishop of Chur, from whom they wished to obtain permission to carry out their unusual project. At last word came. On October 24, the bishop welcomed them to his residence, "an ancient edifice with a tower dating back to the Roman invasion before the time of Christ." But before discussing the object of their visit, he insisted that they have dinner with him, in the course of which he listened with unfeigned interest to the purpose of the quest which had brought them so many miles from home. At first he gave them little encouragement, then advised delay, but ended by writing a letter to Father Florian Venzins, the pastor of St. Mary's at Sagens. After giving them directions to this place, he dismissed them with his blessing.[15]

On arriving at the little station of Valendaz-Sagens, they learned that they were still some distance from their destination. A difficult climb over the mountains and repeated inquiries about the right direction finally brought them, all spent from the roughness of the way, the heat, and the dust, to the church at Sagens. Proceeding within, they at once sought the marble slab which Mother Ludovica had asked be erected thirty-five years before to the memory of Mother Brunner, but it gave them no clue as to the actual spot where her remains were entombed. After offering a prayer for light and courage, they ventured to present themselves at the rectory.

Father Venzins was visibly startled on receiving the Sisters, who, while they claimed to be Americans, spoke the dialect of the village. He continued to regard them with mistrust even after he had read the letter of the bishop urging him to use caution and "to keep the tomb, should it be discovered, intact, until further orders."[16] In the pastor's own mind there was room for doubt about the possibility of identifying the remains of the deceased foundress. But he consented to let the Sisters interview several old men of the village to gain what information they could about the tomb of the "pious Mother," the title by which she was still known among them.

The one mark of identification of the vault which the Sisters knew from tradition was an iron ring in the stone slab covering the crypt. Mention of the ring awoke memories in the mind of one elderly gentleman, who recalled having tripped over such a ring in the floor near the altar rail when he was a boy. Since then a new floor covering had perhaps hidden the iron ring from view.

This squaring of facts seemed to Father Venzins evidence enough to allow the Sisters to proceed with their undertaking. He promised to report the coincidence to Bishop Vincenz; until his verdict was received and matters with the civil authorities were settled, the Sisters, he advised, would do well to find lodging in the vicinity. He named Loewenberg Institute, a half-mile walk from Sagens, as a suitable place where they might stay.

Although without sufficient personal effects for a long stay, since most of their baggage was at Schellenberg, Mother Agreda and her companions looked forward with pleasure to a few days (so they thought) in the environs of Loewenberg castle, with all its historical interest. The early story of the founding of the Congregation seemed to unfold in every path and stone and tree as they trudged up the narrow road to the only building that still bears the name of Loewenberg — an orphanage near the site of the ancient castle, conducted by the Sisters of Mercy of St. Vincent de Paul from Ingenbohl. There they arrived, thoroughly exhausted, just in time for evening Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

The next morning the Americans were eager to explore their surroundings. From their window they viewed the beautiful Rhine valley below, lying peaceful in the dawning light — a scene upon which Mother Brunner must have often gazed meditatively.[17] Later they visited the site of the ancient castle, several hundred yards from the orphanage. Nothing remained of the old bulwark save a heap of blackened ruins, the result of a devastating fire on April 14, 1889. A large wooden cross marked the place where the chapel had been. From 1851 until this disaster the ancient castle had served as the orphan asylum.[18]

Making their way past the terraced gardens down the mountainside, the travelers directed their steps again to St. Mary's. They found the pastor more favorable to their cause after they had assured him that the Congregation would bear the full expense of the exhumation. On their way back to Loewenberg they stopped in St. Peter's Church in Schleuis, where they discovered that Mother Brunner was still remembered in a perpetual Mass which she had founded there almost a century before.[19]

All too soon the visitors were to realize that events move at a slower tempo in Europe than in America. What they thought would be a matter of a day, or of several days at most, stretched out to almost a fortnight. Wintry weather with a heavy snowfall caught them unprepared for such an emergency. But they were determined to see their quest through.

At last word came from the Bishop of Chur that the date for the exhumation, which had first been set for October 28, was postponed to November 6. In the meantime they were to procure a suitable container for depositing and transferring the relics. All signs of ennui left them as they hastened "on foot through wind and snow" to the nearby village of Slanz, where they specified a casket of larchwood lined with copper. They also procured linen wrappings and silk linings.

Another snowstorm kept them indoors for the next few days, but they were so busy with needle and thread, preparing the casket for their anticipated treasure, that the time passed quickly. On the feast of All Saints they ventured down to the village of Schleuis for Mass. On All Souls' Day they attended the solemn ceremonies for the dead in St. Mary's at Sagens and took part in the procession three times around the cemetery, during which "heavy clouds rolled so low that the procession seemed to be moving in another world — in the shades and shadows of purgatory."[20]

November 6 dawned at last. Arriving early at St. Mary's, accompanied by a bone specialist and a photographer, the Sisters found that the concrete floor in front of the altar railing had been taken up, exposing to view a marble slab from which a large iron ring had evidently been removed. They felt more confident of success than ever.

Before long the church began to fill with people. By 1:45 P. M. the invited guests among the clergy and religious had arrived to meet and welcome Bishop Vincenz. Besides His Excellency and the pastor of St. Mary's, the witnesses included two Precious Blood missionaries — Father Gregory Jussell of Feldkirch, Austria, and Father Karl Shilter of Schellenberg — and several priests from the neighboring parishes. Among the religious present, besides Mother Agreda and her companions, were some Sisters from Schellenberg and Loewenberg. Other important witnesses were: Dr. A. Tuor, a bone specialist; Messrs. Anton Cavelti, Moritz Cavelti, A. Bergmann, J. A. Beccarelli who had made the casket, H. Beccarelli, Venantius Meisen, great nephew of Sister Clara Meisen, Laurens Cavelti and others.[21]

At two o'clock the exhumation began. Eight men removed the marble slab over the crypt and the sexton descended into the opening. There was for a moment general dismay when he reported that no identifying marks whatever could be found on the coffins. The bishop prayed for some sign by which they would be enabled to identify unmistakably the remains of the saintly foundress. The climax of this dramatic suspense has been aptly described by one of the eyewitnesses:

> Tense anticipation made the beating of hearts almost audible. The throng stood motionless. The movements of the good bishop as he nervously clasped and unclasped his twitching fingers might have given the clue, "See to the hands." On the verdict of the bone specialist the first two coffins were closed and placed in their former positions in the crypt. Our eyes peered into the third coffin as the lid was lifted. Suspense was at a climax. Again the bishop suggested, "We must pray for a miracle, some sure sign." To our minds there could be no doubt that the skull which rested on the pillow of moss was that of Mother Brunner. The sexton drew forth a crucifix and part of a rosary, but His Excellency insisted that all who reposed here were Catholics, customarily buried with crucifix and beads. The bone specialist stood ready to verify or deny any similarity which might exist between the bones discovered and those which would belong to a person of Mother Anna Maria Brunner's description.
>
> While His Excellency waited, we remembered that our Mother had been buried with a reliquary of St. Aloysius clasped in her hands. This might be intact. Toward the upper end of the coffin the astonished sexton found a solid

> mass which seemed to be the heart. In his excitement he tossed it to the stone pavement. An old woman perched on the pulpit steps cried, "The praying hands!" Reverently the writer lifted what really proved to be our Mother's hands which, in spite of the jar, were still tightly clasped. The bishop's searching eye discovered between the palms the silver reliquary, which he drew forth and accepted as the God-given mark of identification.[22]

Dr. Tuor, on examining the skull, confirmed the identity of the remains in the coffin and gave a written testimony of his conclusions.[23] After each particle of the bones had been carefully wrapped in linen and placed on the silken cushions in the copper-lined casette, the bishop placed his official seal on it, and the witnesses signed the document of exhumation. All shared in the great joy of the Sisters, whose determined efforts had been crowned with signal success.

His Excellency insisted on taking Mother Agreda and her companions with their precious casket in his car to the foot of the mountain, where he left them with his farewell blessing. Aided by Father Carrigiet, the frail chaplain of the orphanage, they managed to carry their burden up the icy mountain path. Before the altar of the chapel in Loewenberg Institute they placed it in state, surrounding it with candles and flowers. According to tradition, the tabernacle on the altar was the one before which Mother Brunner had kept nightly vigils in the old castle. Here her remains were to rest for several days, an object of veneration and wonder, especially on the part of the children, who had listened with wide-eyed interest to Father Carrigiet's story of the exhumation. Before retiring that night Mother Agreda cabled the good news of their discovery to Cardinal Sincero in Rome, to Archbishop McNicholas in Cincinnati, and to the motherhouse in Dayton.

The presence of the American Sisters in this quiet countryside had from the start created quite a stir among the villagers; the events of November 6 had raised their interest and curiosity to a high pitch. Priests and people alike realized too late that

Reliquary of Mother Maria Anna Brunner, Salem Heights, Dayton, Ohio

they had possessed a real treasure, and could only regret their long neglect of it. Sensing the attitude of the people and fearing that they might still claim the "pious Mother" as one of their own, the Americans lost no time in getting the casket safely across the Swiss border and in insuring its safe passage over the Atlantic. The time before sailing was spent in procuring the necessary transportation documents and having them properly legalized by the American, Swiss, and Italian consuls. Regular passenger privileges were obtained for Mother Brunner's relics.

Finally on November 30, Thanksgiving Day, the pilgrims settled down in their cabins on the *Rex,* grateful to Divine Providence for having brought their affairs to a happy issue. The chaplain aboard ship, Father Umberto Cattani, who soon heard of their strange quest and of the treasure they were bearing home, shared their joy and included a thanksgiving intention in his daily Mass during the voyage.

In New York negotiations with the customs officers had been settled beforehand through the courtesy of Father Urban Nageleisen, and there was little delay when Mother Agreda and her Sisters landed on December 7. The next morning, the feast of the Immaculate Conception, they were in Dayton.

Mother Emma and several other Sisters were at the station to welcome them. On arriving at the motherhouse, their car was met at the entrance of the driveway by a solemn procession of priests, acolytes, Sisters, and laity. The casette was escorted to the mortuary chapel and temporarily placed on the altar amid lights and flowers. Returning to the large chapel, the Sisters intoned a *Magnificat* of thanksgiving, for the Lord had indeed exalted the humble.[24]

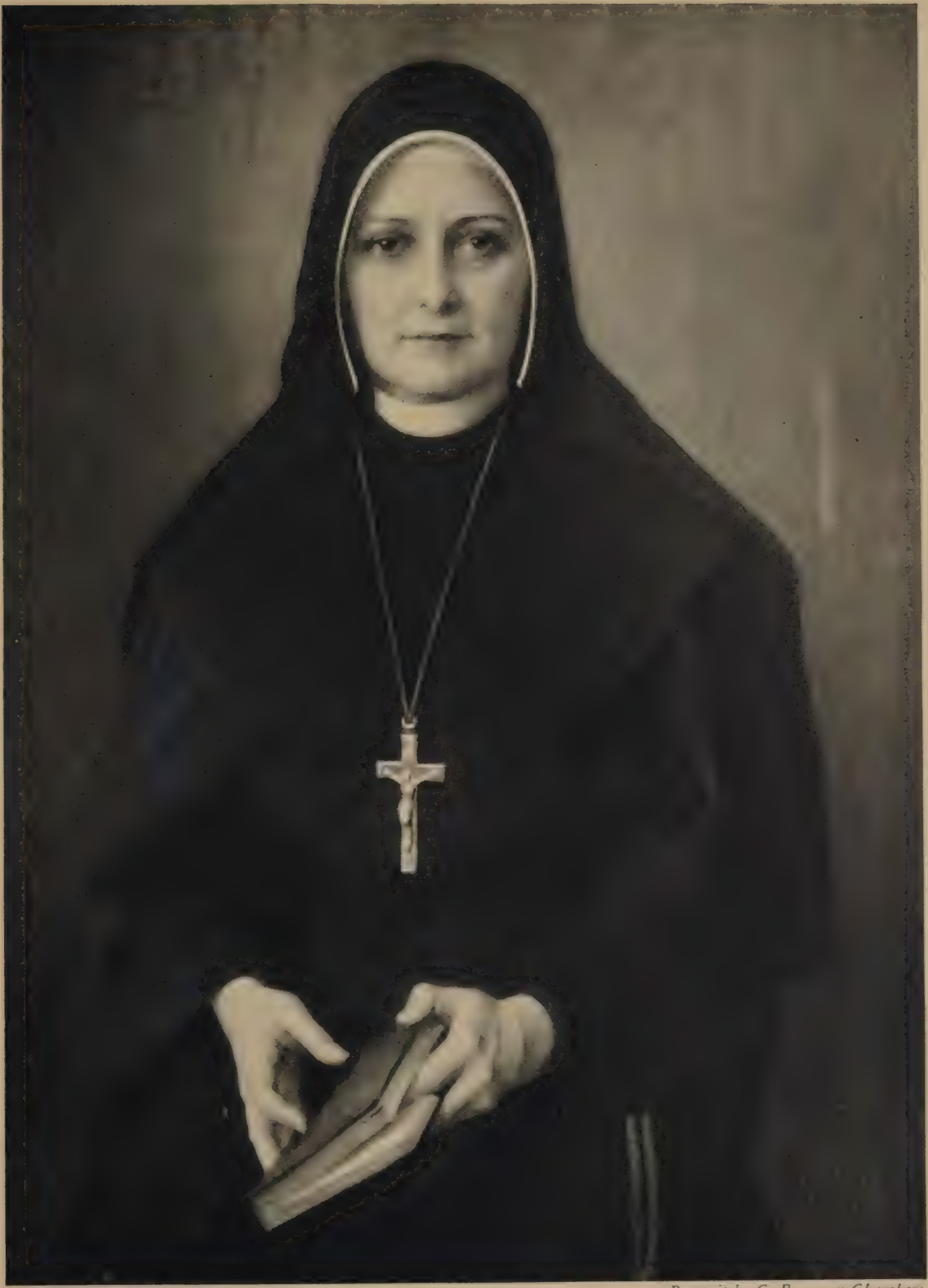
Almost immediately the Sisters set to work to prepare a suitable shrine for the permanent deposition of the relics. Summer had come, however, before it was completed. A face form, modeled from a copy of the only authentic portrait of Mother Brunner as an elderly Swiss matron, and according to Father Brunner's description of her, was exquisitely sculptured by Clement Barnhorn, a Cincinnati artist. The body was then laid out in effigy with the bones of the extremities exposed to view. Her clasped hands with flesh and nails intact rested on the breast, while brain, jawbone, and other particles were separately enclosed in the large glass case which holds the body. This was sealed with the episcopal seal of authenticity by Archbishop McNicholas on August 15, 1933. A kneecap, also bearing the episcopal seal, was preserved separately so that pilgrims visiting the shrine might touch their beads or other religious articles to it.[25]

C. Bosseron Chambers of New York also lent his talents to do honor to Mother Brunner by painting a life-sized portrait of her. It is a composite picture drawn from impressions received by reading her life, from portraits of her, and from photographs of her direct descendants. Mother Brunner is depicted as a young Sister of the Precious Blood, dressed in the habit worn by the Sisters of the present day; hence the portrait, as such, has no historical basis in fact. Nevertheless, as an idealized creation of the artist it deserves the high praise that has been accorded it. At present it is recognized as the *officially approved* representation of Mother Brunner.[26]

Archbishop McNicholas was one of the first clients to recommend petitions to the intercession of Mother Brunner. Several weeks after her relics were enshrined at Salem Heights he wrote to Mother Agreda:

> I hereby request that you and your Sisters petition your saintly Mother Foundress, Mother Brunner, to obtain, provided it be pleasing to God, five favors that seem to me to concern the welfare of the Church in the United States and in the diocese.[27]

His Excellency has subsequently ascribed a number of favors which he obtained to Mother Brunner's intercession and has been zealous in promoting her cause among the faithful. As the fame of her shrine became more widespread, pilgrims came from every direction to view her relics and to recommend their



Portrait by C. Bosseron Chambers

MOTHER MARIA ANNA BRUNNER

petitions. Hundreds of letters are on file attesting to the favors, spiritual and temporal, which have been received.

On January 15, 1934, the ninety-eighth anniversary of Mother Brunner's death, the centenary of the founding of the Congregation was formally opened at the motherhouse. Directions for the general observance of the Jubilee year included the singing of the *Te Deum* each Sunday evening and the chanting of the *Magnificat* each Saturday in all the houses as thanksgiving for the blessings bestowed on the Congregation during its first century.

Major celebrations at the motherhouse were reserved for the summer months so that as many Sisters as possible could participate. On June 12, the postulants presented a program dedicated to Mother Agreda and the members of her council. It consisted mainly of songs and poems composed by novices, of tableaus depicting Loewenberg and Schellenberg, and of apostrophes to the pioneer Sisters in America and other deceased members. A playlet ending with a visit of Mother Brunner, who exhorted the postulants to follow in the footsteps of the early Sisters, brought this interesting program to a close. On August 1, the novices entertained the community with another program, featuring the foundation of the Congregation and the outstanding Mothers General, novice mistresses, and school directresses.

The religious observance of the centennial was appropriately set for July 1, the feast of the Precious Blood. Ravenello's Mass in honor of St. Joseph Calasanctius, which the Sisters of the various houses had been practicing for months, was sung congregationally under the direction of Professor John Fehring of Cincinnati. Bishop Joseph Albers celebrated a Pontifical High Mass, assisted by Father Ignatius Wagner as archpriest. In his Jubilee sermon Archbishop McNicholas urged the Sisters to imitate the virtues of their saintly Mother Foundress and to inaugurate a crusade of prayer for her beatification.

An outstanding commemorative feature of the Jubilee celebrations was a hundredth-anniversary pageant composed and directed by Sister Adelaide, which was presented on July 29 for the members of the Congregation and again on August 4 for visiting religious of various communities. Before the second presentation, which marked the culmination of the centenary observance, solemn Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was given and a large photograph of the resident and visiting Sisters was taken.[28] The pageant was later published in brochure form. In introducing *The Historic Centennial Pageant* Monsignor Charles E. Baden wrote in part:

> Quite fittingly, notwithstanding the many and great changes looming up between that far-off day of foundation and this of achievement, a feature of the Centenary festivities enjoyed by the Sisters of the Precious Blood is the historic pageant portraying their early history. It is but just that this story should be published. The pioneer Sisters deserve to live in the grateful remembrance of others, who now carry on the same holy work under more prosperous conditions and in a happier environment.
>
> While we rejoice with the Sisters of the Precious Blood of Salem Heights, Dayton, Ohio, on this festival event, we congratulate them on their Century's harvest for the Master, and we pray that He Who has so manifestly blessed their efforts in the past may continue His loving care of them in the future; that their Congregation may ever faithfully serve Holy Mother Church whose perpetual triumph it will augment.[29]

Joy was the keynote of the Jubilee festivities throughout the year. Voices were raised again and again in *Te Deums* of praise and *Magnificats* of thanksgiving. But there were minor notes, too, that refused to be hushed — strong reminders to the Sisters that they were still in exile in this vale of tears.

Among the lesser misfortunes that befell the community during the Jubilee year was a series of accidents following remarkably close upon one another. A fire of unknown origin completely destroyed a new barn at Rome City. Five Sisters were physically disabled through falls more or less serious, which resulted in broken leg or ankle, sprained back, or fractured skull. Three automobile accidents are recorded for this year. In one of them the present Mother General, then Sister Magna Lehman, sustained several broken ribs. Mother Agreda was more unfortunate. When she was returning from Cincinnati to the motherhouse in August, shortly after the centennial celebrations were over, a large truck collided with the community car. Mother Agreda received a cruel gash in her head and a broken kneecap — injuries that required a two-month stay at St. Mary's Hospital in Cincinnati. Even after she was released, she could walk only with the aid of a cane.[30] Owing to her age and diabetic condition, the injury to her knee should have, according to her physician,[31] left her crippled for a long time. Her speedy recovery Mother Agreda ascribed to the intercession of Mother Brunner.[32] A third accident occurred in Los Angeles, California, when Sister Electa and her sister, Sister Eusebia, were hit by an automobile while crossing a street. Both of them sustained rather serious injuries which required several weeks of hospital care.[33]

A great sorrow that darkened the last year of Mother Agreda's term as Superior General was the sudden death of Mother Emma, the result of an automobile accident. Mother Emma, still mentally alert and physically fit in her eightieth year, was serving under the new Constitution as Vicaress General. Her office required her to make frequent trips to various mission houses, especially since Mother Agreda was often prevented from traveling on account of illness. And Mother Emma "of adventurous spirit" was, as in her younger days, always ready to go. It was quite characteristic of her that during her last visit to the West (1927-29) she ventured to ride out over the Pacific in an airplane. She made no secret of her love for traveling and she had traveled extensively in her long life. Once when she was crossing the Potomac to Mount Vernon in a crowded motorboat, a small boy, leaning his elbows on her knees and looking up into her kind eyes, asked her naively, "Are you an old sailor?" With a twinkle in her eye she rejoined: "Yes, I am an old sailor." She spoke truly.

Like everything else that she did, Mother Emma endeavored to supernaturalize her travels, which were for her both a duty and a pleasure. She once expressed the following thoughts in a letter to the Sisters:

> Traveling should remind us that life is a journey, but also that at our journey's end heaven, a beautiful heaven, awaits us. Each day, each hour brings us nearer to heaven. If we only understood how to accept and turn to good account all that each day and each hour brings, as our all-loving God, Who allots and sends everything, would have us do, then our last hour upon earth would be the hour before our entrance into heaven. But I fear that impatience and light-mindedness will make us wait a long time before the gates of heaven open for us. We will be wise and make use of our opportunities, now that we still have the chance before the night breaks in upon us and we are no longer allowed the time to do so. A squandered grace we never receive again. God gives us other graces, but the wasted ones are lost forever.[34]

On the morning of October 29, 1935, she and Sister Victoria were preparing to make a business trip to Cincinnati. Before leaving the motherhouse, she paid a final visit to the sickroom of Sister Fulgentia Armbruster, an elderly Sister who was lingering between life and death. "It is a question, not of days but of hours," Mother Emma remarked to the chaplain with a knowing look at the dying Sister.

In Cincinnati, they visited several mission houses, taking along with them Sister Laura Braun from St. Gregory's Seminary and Sister Alodia Miller from Mount St. Mary's. As she stepped into the automobile at St. Gregory's, Mother Emma remarked to the chauffeur, "Oh, if we were in heaven, we should not have to worry about cars."

The accident occurred late in the afternoon, a few miles from Miamisburg. An automobile driven by a youth of sixteen hit their car head-on, overturning it. Sister Laura, hurled from the car, appeared to be dead. The chauffeur, unable to release the other Sisters, who were pinned beneath the car, cried out in sheer desperation: "O God, send me help!" In a few minutes Father Bernard Robers of Miamisburg and an ambulance were at the scene of the disaster. As soon as she was extricated from the wreckage, Mother Emma, preserving her usual presence of mind, prayed aloud an act of perfect contrition and resignation to the divine will. Though in the worst condition of all, she sat up in the ambulance trying to comfort the others as they were being taken to St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Dayton.

During the next few hours Mother Emma suffered intensely from a fractured skull and nose, broken wrists, bad bruises, internal injuries, and shock. She knew she was going to die. Conscious to the end, she was concerned solely about her injured Sisters and her own immortal soul, which she unceasingly recommended to the mercy of God. The hospital chaplain was at her bedside to give her the last anointing, to pray the prayers for the dying, and to offer what solace he could. Father Alexius arrived in time to give her final absolution. Several other priests and some of the Sisters gathered about, looking on helplessly as she struggled through her death agony. She died at 10:15 that night.[35]

News of her death was dispatched early the next morning to the houses of the Congregation and to members of the hierarchy and clergy who had known Mother Emma intimately. It came as a shock to all, especially to those in Cincinnati who had seen her alive and well the day before. Telegrams of sympathy, letters of condolence, and spiritual bouquets of Holy Masses poured in from far and near. Archbishop Schrembs wrote in part: "Mother Emma was a true religious. May her memory serve as a model for your younger Sisters."[36]

Father Novatus, O. F. M., wrote from San Francisco:

> Mother Emma was a wonderful woman! And I in particular owe her a tremendous debt of gratitude and admira-

> tion. God alone can measure the stupendous blessings that came to Phoenix and San Luis Rey through her instrumentality.[37]

But the highest tribute of all was paid her by Archbishop McNicholas at her obsequies on All Saints' Day before a large group of clergy, religious, and laity who had gathered to show their love and respect to the deceased. Since no one has delineated better the character of their beloved Mother Emma, his words of sincere admiration deserve to be treasured by the Sisters as a lasting monument to her memory:

> We stand today in the presence of death — a death which, viewed from a purely human standpoint, was indeed shocking, a death that came without warning, a death that means a loss to this community which cannot be measured in words, but still a blessed death, looking upon it in the light of Christian faith. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord!"
>
> Mother Emma was not unprepared for her sudden summons, since her whole life had been lived in close union with God. The greatest concern of her life can be expressed in one word — God! She lived with God, she lived for God, she died with God's holy name upon her lips. Despite the tragic accident and sufferings consequent upon it during her last hours, she was perfectly conscious and composed until the very end. She was all solicitude for her Sisters injured with her. She had the grace of receiving the Last Sacraments. Many times I talked with Mother Emma about death. I knew her mind and her heart. I knew that the will of God meant everything to her in life and in death.
>
> It was Mother Emma's privilege to be an instrument chosen by God to build up this community, in which she spent nearly sixty-six years of her life. She was truly a builder, as she was truly a Mother to her Sisters, upon whose character she left a deep spiritual impress. The Sisters of this community can thank God for their religious spirit, for their love of prayer, for their union with Our Lord in the Holy Eucharist, and for their devotion to the Precious Blood.

And for this spirit they must in great measure thank Mother Emma, who so wisely guided the community during many years.

Somehow this morning's Mass — the Mass of All Saints — seems most fitting. Considering Mother Emma's holy life, her union with God, her spirit of prayer, we may hope that she is already enjoying the peace and happiness of God's saints. There was in the Mass today a note of joy, just as there was in Mother Emma's life. Anxieties she had many. Difficulties she courageously faced and overcame. Never did trials or crosses destroy her spirit of joy. She served the Lord in joy and in thanksgiving for His never-ceasing blessings and graces.

In recalling the funeral Mass of Mother Emma you will remember that her mortal remains were not present in this chapel that she built, that she loved, and in which she was an adorer during the day and every night in its silent hours. Her spirit seemed to be present at this morning's Mass. I trust that the memory of Mother Emma will make the community appreciate the heritage of the religious spirit and devotion that she bequeathed to it. You may feel that she continues to abide with you in spirit.

We are about to commit her lifeless body to Mother Earth, where it will return to dust. We do so with complete resignation to God's holy will. We may not understand the will of God, but we accept it and bow in humble submission to it.

I am sure all the priests here present, and all those who knew Mother Emma, recognized in her a holy soul, a soul entirely consecrated to God, a soul striving to live always in His presence, a soul devoted in a special manner to the Precious Blood. I never talked to Mother Emma without feeling that I was in the presence of a very saintly religious. Her death is a loss not only to her own community but to the whole diocese.

Although advanced in years, Mother Emma's mind was still active. She saw things with remarkable clearness. She might have been for many more years, according to human calculations, a most useful member of her community, a wise

> and experienced counselor, an ex-Mother General who could have rendered invaluable service.
>
> If Mother Emma's death is a great loss, remember, dear Sisters, that God who sent the unexpected cross will give the community correspondingly great blessings and consolations.
>
> I need not ask the priests here present and the Sisters to be mindful of Mother Emma in death. Remember her in your Masses and prayers. Pray for her soul and for the souls of all the faithful departed.[38]

Though years have slipped by since Mother Emma was laid to rest in the quiet convent cemetery at Salem Heights, time has not dimmed the memory of her in the minds and hearts of the Sisters. Scores of them visit her grave daily to bless it with a few drops of holy water and to offer a few ejaculatory prayers for the repose of her soul. Her memory is kept alive, too, at recreation when time and again Mother Emma is brought up as a subject of conversation. Her remarkable devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, lovable traits of her character, her pet peeves, her wise counsels, humorous incidents connected with her life and travels, anecdotes she loved to tell and retell — all furnish abundant food for reminiscences, both edifying and entertaining. As long as her memory is thus held sacred, her spirit — which was also the spirit of Mother Ludovica, Mother Kunigunda, and Mother Brunner before her — will tend to keep the members of the Congregation of the Precious Blood true to the ideals which were handed down from the beginning.

EPILOGUE

IN THE HALL OF MEMORIES

Epilogue

IN THE HALL OF MEMORIES

ON JANUARY 15, 1936, the Congregation of the Sisters of the Precious Blood celebrated the hundredth anniversary of Mother Maria Anna Brunner's death. A high Mass was prescribed for all the houses, to be offered in thanksgiving for the graces and blessings bountifully bestowed upon the Congregation since the beginning. It was through Mother Brunner, in the providence of God, that the infant community first came into existence. Without doubt it is through her continued intercession, which in her dying moments she promised to make before the throne of God, that this same community has struggled, grown, and developed into a large Congregation of religious women engaged in divers occupations in Ohio, Indiana, Missouri, Colorado, Arizona, California, and on the Schellenberg in distant Liechtenstein — laboring to sanctify their own souls and to help save the souls of others in order to realize their peculiar aim: *Laus et honor Sanguini Jesu.*

On that same day a Hall of Memories was opened at the motherhouse. In this museum one can reconstruct and visualize the past history of the community through the many relics here treasured. Portraits or photographs of personages, and pictures or scenes of the past, are arranged in glass-covered panels along the upper wall, while other mementos are displayed in cases below.

A large picture of Loewenberg castle in charcoal carries us back to the cradle of the community in faroff Switzerland; below it a family tree of the Mont family bearing the portraits and coats of arms of the leading noblemen, hereditary owners of the castle, takes us even farther back — to the heart of the

Middle Ages. The period of expansion is represented by a miniature model of the first log convent at New Riegel, the cradle of the community in America, and by pictures of the other houses of nocturnal adoration that sprang up in quick succession during the first decade in this country. Numerous views of modern convents and mission houses, of schools and charitable institutions, show the rapid development of the Congregation over the past fifty years.

Looking down from the wall are faces of persons who have become familiar to the reader through these pages. In one panel are the Supreme Pontiffs under whose successive reigns the community developed from a pious union of "poor Sisters" to a pontifical institute. Gregory XVI, who gave oral approval to the first small band of "Sisters Adorers of the Precious Blood," is for some reason missing. But Pius IX and Leo XIII are there; so are Pius X, who raised Gaspar del Bufalo to the altar in 1904; Benedict XV, of World War I memory; Pius XI, who placed the stamp of papal approval on the new Constitution; and our present gloriously reigning Pius XII. Below in the same panel are members of the hierarchy who have been intimately associated with the progress of the Congregation in America: the generous Archbishop Purcell, the saintly Archbishop Elder, the indefatigable Archbishop Moeller, our present zealous Archbishop McNicholas, besides other bishops who have been friends of the community. In the center of this panel Blessed Gaspar is pictured in the act of preaching as he points to the Precious Blood streaming from the Crucified Savior; and down the sides are arranged his disciples, stalwart Missionaries of the Precious Blood, especially the outstanding provincials — Brunner, Kunkler, Austermann, and Drees — and former superiors and spiritual directors who *made* the early history of the Congregation.

In another panel a prominent place is given to the Reverend Mothers General: Mother Kunigunda, who for thirty years carried out submissively and humbly the behests of her priestly superiors; and around her are grouped her five successors — Mother Ludovica, Mother Emma, Mother Josephine, Mother

Agreda, and the present Reverend Mother Magna — who for more than fifty years have independently guided the community to heights of achievement undreamed of in pioneer days. Most striking of all the portraits in this historic museum is a life-sized painting of Mother Emma, sitting with her hands calmly folded in her lap, as if ready to talk with you. How much of the history of the community those mute lips would disclose could they but speak!

In this Hall of Memories the educational advancement of the Congregation can be traced pictorially from the one-room rural school with its pupils accoutred in the old-fashioned garb of bygone days, to the most modern city school with its band and its scout troops decked out in full regalia, or a sedate graduating class in chic uniform. And here we meet face to face those who were responsible for this steady march of progress along educational lines throughout the years: the far-sighted and energetic school directresses — Sisters Cecilia, Victoria, Angeline, and Rosalie — who have lead, guided, and continually urged forward to ever higher standards the teachers, demure or happy-faced, here grouped about them. They have co-operated with the supervisors in making the schools more modern in equipment, more progressive in curriculum, more psychological in method, and more fruitful in results: physical, intellectual, and spiritual. The most illustrious products of their educational efforts are represented in the photographs of several bishops — Archbishop Stritch, Archbishop Floersch, Bishop Dwenger and Bishop Thill — besides the scores of priests who were at one time the "Sisters' boys."

Pictorial views of other institutions, such as Kneipp Sanitarium, Maria-Joseph Home for the Aged, St. Joseph's Orphanage, with their personnel and inmates, show the different types of charitable work in which the Sisters are engaged. Small families of Sisters working in the various seminaries or bishops' homes, and Sister nurses in training in hospitals, represent other activities.

There are some panels displaying scenes that commemorate outstanding events in the history of the Congregation. These are of special interest to the spectator. One can travel by picture to Einsiedeln, to Schellenberg, to Rome, and relive the experiences of the Sisters who made the trips abroad. In St. Mary's in Sagens he can view the exhumation of Mother Brunner's remains; he can meet Captain Caroboti and Chaplain Cattani of the *Rex*, the ship that bore those precious remains to America. The whole story of the enshrinement of her relics and other important events of the Jubilee year, 1934, unfold before one in pictorial review.

Other treasures on exhibition in this historic museum are yet more precious because more intimately connected with the lives of prominent members of the Congregation of the Precious Blood who have brought signal honor upon their family name. Here among other relics of Blessed Gaspar is a surplice that he wore while giving a soul-stirring mission in the small town of Marino near Rome; there is a large piece of the wooden casket that once held his blessed remains. Among the many objects displayed that were familiarly handled and used by Father Brunner, are several instruments of mortification, patent proofs of his penitential spirit, and a golden pyx which he often clasped to his breast when bearing Sacred Viaticum to the dying over the rough, primitive roads. As one picks up and examines a lock of greying hair of Mother Brunner, or a shattered pair of spectacles, souvenir of Mother Emma's fatal accident, or the cane that Mother Agreda could discard after her wonderful cure — what memories are awakened, what lessons are recalled, what sentiments of renewed love and loyalty are inspired!

One comes away from the Hall of Memories with his vision a bit cleared and his sense of values somewhat altered. Perhaps the question uppermost in his mind is: In what does the chief glory of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Precious Blood, as revealed in its historical remains and in the historical account of its achievements, consist? Not, certainly, in its humble beginnings, its meager endowments, its slow organization; not in

Mother Mary Magna, 1936-

rank, or wealth, or prestige. The Sisters' chief title to glory is their devotion to the Precious Blood, bequeathed to them by their founders, nurtured and kept aglow by perpetual adoration, and spread among others by example and teaching. This is the greatest treasure they possess. "You know that you were redeemed . . . not with perishable things, with silver or gold, . . . but with the Precious Blood of Christ" (1 Peter I, 18-19).

APPENDICES
NOTES ON THE TEXT
INDEX

APPENDIX I

CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY OF EVENTS

1936-1944

1936

August — Election of officers for the community, Archbishop McNicholas presiding.

Results: Sister Mary Magna Lehman, Mother General
Counselors, in order:
  Sister M. Regis Kirschner, Vicaress General
  Sister M. Simplicia McGreevy, also directress of schools
  Sister M. Theresita Berting, also secretary general
  Sister M. Ludgeria Bellinghausen
  Sister M. Macrina Kieber, treasurer general

October — Removal of the Sisters of the Precious Blood from St. Theresa's Home for the Aged in Silverton, Cincinnati, Ohio. They were replaced by the Dominican Sisters of the Sick Poor, New York.

Reinstallation of Mother Mary Agreda, former Mother General, as local superior of Kneipp Sanitarium, Rome City, Indiana.

The Highway Commission of the State of Indiana acquired land from the sanitarium, through which the new state road was to pass.

November — Exhumation of the remains of thirty-six Sisters and seven lay persons from the cemetery of the Kneipp Sanitarium, which was included in the property sold to the Highway Commission of the State of Indiana.

1937

February — Beginning of Saturday instruction classes at the new mission for Negroes in Sedalia, Missouri, under the charge of Reverend John Nells, C. PP. S. Sister Basildis Spegele of Sacred Heart School conducted the classes until vacation and resumed them in October.

Approval of the Constitution of the Sisters of the Precious Blood by His Holiness Pius XI, for seven years.

June — Departure of Reverend Alexius Schuette, C. PP. S., beloved chaplain and able instructor at the motherhouse, Salem Heights, for fourteen years.

July — Appointment of Sister M. Victoria as local superior of the former motherhouse at Maria Stein.

August — Arrival of the new chaplain, Reverend E. J. Vonder Haar, who came to Salem Heights from Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, where he was replaced by Father Alexius as chaplain of the Sisters of St. Agnes.

Discontinuation of domestic work at the Fenwick Club, Cincinnati, Ohio.

September — Appointment by His Holiness Pope Pius XI of His Eminence Pietro Cardinal Fumasoni-Biondi as second Cardinal Protector of the Sisters of the Precious Blood.

October — Departure of Mother Magna for her first visitation of the western missions in Missouri, Colorado, Arizona, and California.

December — Death, on December 16, at St. Charles Seminary, Carthagena, Ohio, of Reverend August Seifert, C. PP. S., former chaplain of the motherhouse at Maria Stein and later at Salem Heights. On December 10 he penned his last Christmas greeting and words of farewell to the Sisters.

1938

February — Death, on the sixteenth, of Sister M. Angeline Betz, who had been directress of schools of the Congregation for almost twenty years (1911-1930).

March — Renovation of relic chapel at the motherhouse, Salem Heights.

June — A two weeks' vacation school was conducted by Sister M. Alda Spegele and Sister M. Celestine Landoll at Sherwood, Ohio, a mission under the charge of Reverend Robert Knoepfle.

July — Withdrawal of the Sisters of the Precious Blood from the domestic department of the Catholic Sisters' College, Brookland, Washington, D. C., where they had served for twenty-one years.

September — Opening of St. Joseph's School for Negroes in Sedalia, Missouri. Reverend E. Gengler, C. PP. S., was the pastor and Sister M. Laurentine Lennartz and Sister Mary LaSalette Hageman were the first teachers.

Installation of an electric bell system for ringing the large chapel bells of the motherhouse at Salem Heights.

November — Death of Mother Agreda at Kneipp Sanitarium, on November 30.

1939

February — Departure of Sister M. Simplicia, directress of schools, on a visitation tour to the western missions.

April — Installation of Sister M. Rogata Ruth as local superior of the Kneipp Sanitarium. This year the name of this institution was changed to "Kneipp Springs."

Erection of a white marble statue of the pleading Sacred Heart on the grounds of the motherhouse, on April 12. The marble was quarried and sculptured in Italy.

June-July — Vacation schools conducted at two missions, "The Bend" and Marydale near Sherwood, Ohio; at Pala, Vista, and Oceanside, California; at Sonora, Alhambra, and Tempe, and the Stephenson Public School in Phoenix, Arizona.

November — Marble statues of two angels imported from Italy, hoisted by means of a derrick and placed on marble pedestals on each side of the exposition altar in the chapel at the motherhouse.

1940

March — Departure of Sister M. Simplicia, supervisor of schools, for a trip to the western missions.

Purchase of a residence, formerly owned by the deceased Mrs. Elizabeth Kaup, at Burkettsville, Ohio, to serve as a mission house for the Sisters teaching in this town.

June — On June 1, blessing of the new statues of Our Lady and St. Bernadette that were erected in the Lourdes Grotto, located in the park of the motherhouse and completed on May 1.

June-July — Vacation schools started at Immaculate Conception, Portland, Indiana; Sacred Heart, Sedalia, and Gravois Mills, Missouri; Ray, Superior, and Immaculate Heart School, Phoenix, Arizona.

July — Exhumation of the remains of fifty-eight Sisters from the cemetery at Mary's Home, Indiana, and removal to Maria Stein cemetery.

August — Installation of Sister Mary Cleopha as local superior of the convent at New Riegel, Ohio.

Domestic department of the episcopal residence of Most Reverend George J. Rehring in Hyde Park, Cincinnati, taken over.

October — Visitation tour of western missions begun by Mother Magna.

1941

February-March — Installation of patients' call bell system with signal and bed lights in the infirmary of the motherhouse.

June-July — More vacation schools started: in vicinity of Phoenix, Arizona, with centers at St. Mary's School, Longfellow School, Mesa and Golden Gate; at Colecamp and Springfork, Missouri, in the diocese of Kansas City. Many of the vacation schools of the previous year were reopened.

September — Annual visitation of schools in Missouri begun by Sister Mary Simplicia, community supervisor.

October — Dedication, on October 5, of the mission chapel, Queen of Peace, at Millville, near Hamilton, Ohio, where three Sisters teaching at Regina High School, Norwood, Ohio, inaugurated Saturday instruction classes in Christian doctrine.

Departure of Sister M. Simplicia for visitation of schools in Arizona and California.

December — Completion of redecorating of the main chapel of the motherhouse. Other improvements made in the course of the winter include the installation in the chapel of the Bogan sound system, a ventilating and cooling system, a new lighting system, and cushioned pads for the kneelers.

Enrollment of twenty-four Sisters in the First Aid course to be conducted on Saturdays at the Good Samaritan Hospital, Dayton, Ohio.

1942

January — Three classes in Christian doctrine on Saturdays and Sundays, in addition to those already on the program for the Sisters at Phoenix, Arizona — at Guadalupe and Tin Village for the Yacque Indians, and at Scottsdale for Mexican children.

March — Inserting of mosaic panels in the open spaces of the exposition altar at the motherhouse.

April — Primary election day in the community. Seventy-two delegates elected for the new general chapter.

May — General meeting for the opening of ballots.

A new edition of the *Prayer Manual of the Sisters of the Precious Blood* placed in the hands of the printer.

July — Convocation of the general chapter of newly elected delegates. Dates set for the prescribed preliminary meeting and for the general election.

August — Preliminary meeting of the general chapter.

General election. Meeting of the general chapter under the presidency of Archbishop McNicholas. Elections held by secret vote placed only one new member in office. Sister M. Celesta Grimmelsman took the place of Sister M. Ludgeria Bellinghausen as fourth councilor.

Annual meeting of the Sisters as members of the legal corporation of the Sisters of the Precious Blood.

Election and installation of two superiors and eight directresses:
At the motherhouse — Sister M. Gerarda Meder
At Kneipp Springs — Sister M. Ludgeria Bellinghausen

Directresses:
Celina, Ohio — Sister M. Sixta Enneking
Episcopal residence, Norwood — Sister M. Rogata Ruth
Maria-Joseph Home — Sister M. Claudia Kreutzer
Minster, Ohio — Sister M. Basildis Spegele
Phoenix, Arizona — Sister M. Irma Roling
Regina High School — Sister M. Josepha Seitz
St. Joseph's Orphanage — Sister M. Alena Braun
San Luis Rey, California — Sister M. Gebharda Spitznagel

September — The taking over of two additional schools, geographically about 1,900 miles apart — the public school at Chickasaw, Ohio, and a Mexican mission school at Mesa, Arizona.

October — Death of Sister Mary Electa Fleck at Phoenix, Arizona, on the twelfth. For about thirty years she had been the staff and stay of the western missions in Arizona and California.

On October 18, the Golden Sacerdotal Jubilee celebration of Father Joseph Sailer at Maria Stein in anticipation of the correct date, November 22, which marked also the fiftieth anniversary of the translation of the holy relics from the old to the new relic chapel. Father J. Sailer had been ordained on that occasion by the Most Reverend William Henry Elder in the Maria Stein chapel.

November-December — Visitation trip by the Vicaress General, Sister Mary Regis, and the supervisor of schools, Sister Mary Simplicia, to the western missions in Missouri, Arizona, and California.

Furnishing of Minster chapel with liturgical altar, drapes, and suspended cross.

Change of headgear for postulants introduced on Christmas Eve. The brown bonnet, in use for almost a century, was discarded, and a black veil attached to a one-inch white linen band substituted.

Renovation and painting of the chapel at New Riegel convent in preparation for the celebration of the centenary of nocturnal adoration in America; adoration had begun in New Riegel in 1844.

1943

March-June — Instructions in First Aid given at the motherhouse by Beth Anderton, R. N., of the Red Cross, to a class of forty-five Sisters, novices, and aspirants. Twenty-two students continued with the advanced course.

June — Removal of Father E. J. Vonder Haar from chaplaincy at the motherhouse after six years of most faithful service, by an appointment to the pastorate.

Installation of the new chaplain, Father R. F. Grotenrath, for ten years professor of moral theology and liturgy at St. Charles Seminary, Carthagena, Ohio.

June-July — Vacation school of Christian doctrine and classes in religion on Saturdays and Sundays of the school year in Ohio, Arizona, and California, for the benefit of 1,835 American, Indian, and Mexican children.

August — Expiration of term of office for two superiors and ten directresses, and consequently the installation as superior of Sister Mary Alodia Miller at Maria Stein convent, and Sister Mary Cleopha Ludwig for a second term at New Riegel convent.

Installation of directresses at mission houses as follows:
Alvada, Ohio — Sister M. Providentia Goshe
Bryant, Indiana — Sister M. Aloysia Landoll
Chancery, Cincinnati — Sister M. Emelita Timmerman
Cloverdale, Ohio — Sister M. Myra Luckman
Coldwater, Ohio — Sister M. Bertina Pool
Fort Recovery, Ohio — Sister M. Colletta Hamant
Miamisburg, Ohio — Sister M. Lillian Remaklus
Mount St. Mary Seminary, Norwood — Sister M. Terentia Cordonnier
St. Mary's School, St. Joseph, Missouri — Sister M. Perpetua Schoen
Troy, Ohio — Sister M. Berissima Schlaechter

Painting and remodeling of the chapel in the mission house at Celina. It was furnished with liturgical altar, drapes, suspended cross, and new statues.

September — Our services given to a second center for convert work, the first one being at Regina High School, Norwood; the second, located in St. Mary's parish, Dayton, Ohio, to be presided over by Sister M. Adelaide.

November — Visitation of Mother Magna and the supervisor of schools, Sister Mary Simplicia, to the two missions in St. Joseph, Missouri, and to the Sisters stationed at the episcopal residence in Denver, Colorado.

1944

January — On January 8, the motherhouse at Salem Heights acquired an additional farm of 77.5 acres for the sum of $25,000.

Sister M. Macrina Kieber, the treasurer general of the Congregation, died on January 11, of a second paralytic stroke. The council elected by deliberative vote Sister M. Amabilis Neumeister as her successor and appointed Sister M. Victoria Drees, the ex-treasurer general, her assistant.

On January 24, two foreign-born Sisters received their citizenship papers.

February — On February 9, twelve more Sisters received their citizenship papers.

Sister M. Mercuria Kraft died at New Riegel on February 12, and Sister M. Tertia Maier at Maria Stein on February 19.

March — A conference on the religious life, to be held each month on the day of recollection, was inaugurated at the motherhouse by the chaplain, Father Roy Grotenrath.

On March 25, the council, upon the advice of Archbishop McNicholas, decided to take steps for introducing into the Congregation the recitation of the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin.

Improvements were made in the furnishings and fixtures of the relic chapel in the motherhouse.

April — Eight Sisters became citizens of the United States on April 25.

On the same day the renovation of the Mother Brunner chapel in the motherhouse was begun, a fire broke out in the Maria-Joseph Home for the Aged, completely damaging a room and its furnishings.

May — On May 1, the practice of the *Missa Recitata* was introduced at the motherhouse.

During the month Father Roy Grotenrath gave a talk on vocation to the sisterhood, in six high schools in the state taught by the Sisters of the Precious Blood.

June — Father Kenneth Ward, C. P., Sub-prior of Holy Cross Monastery, Cincinnati, Ohio, gave the first annual summer retreat at the motherhouse.

July — A Rural Life Institute, sponsored by the National Rural Life Conference and directed by Father Joseph Urbain, was held on July 13 at Salem Heights for the various sisterhoods of Dayton.

On July 16, a Silver and Golden Jubilee Festival was celebrated at the motherhouse.

On July 25, the Congregation of the Precious Blood observed the centenary of its founding in America by a solemn Pontifical Mass of thanksgiving offered by the Most Reverend George J. Rehring in the presence of the Most Reverend John T. McNicholas. The Very Reverend Joseph M. Marling, provincial of the Fathers of the Precious Blood, delivered the sermon on the occasion, and Archbishop McNicholas paid a special tribute to the Sisters after the Mass.

SERMON BY THE VERY REVEREND JOSEPH M. MARLING

In the Epistle to the Hebrews, vi, 10, we read these words: "For God is not unjust that He should forget your work and the love which you have shown in His name — you who have ministered and do minister to the saints."

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Your Grace, Your Excellencies, Right Reverend and Very Reverend Monsignori, Reverend Fathers, dear Sisters, and Friends:

We are gathered here this morning to observe with great joy and jubilation the centenary of the coming of the Sisters of the Precious Blood to this country. One hundred years ago this very month, after a tedious ocean voyage, three Sisters reached Seneca County, Ohio, to begin their labors in the pioneer settlements of the diocese of Cincinnati. It was Father Brunner who had beckoned — that saintly son of their saintly foundress — summoning them to assist in spreading the message of the Precious Blood among the settlers of the New World. Small indeed were the beginnings, and frightening the situations which the Sisters faced. But the spirit of the noble and holy woman who had founded them was theirs. In age and grace and wisdom the Congregation grew. Toiling and praying, instructing youths by the thousands, shrinking from no labor which meant a harvest in souls, it advanced to become what it is today — a powerful force for the spread of the kingdom of Christ in this land. Is it any wonder that we rejoice with the Sisters this morning? Is it any wonder that at this solemn Pontifical Mass we pour out our hearts in gratitude to Almighty God for all the favors which He has bestowed upon them, and through them, upon the Church in the United States? Nor do we forget, as we are here in the Savior's presence, to beg Him to continue His guidance and His benedictions so that in His hands the Sisters of the Precious Blood may become an even more perfect tool for the conquest of souls, an ever more perfect instrument for the drawing of the little ones to His Sacred Heart.

It is on an occasion like this that we are moved to consider the boast of our modern world with regard to what it has achieved for womankind. How often is it not asserted that our age first witnessed the emancipation of women, that our culture first gave women true freedom and equality? These claims are correct, of course, if the real glory of womanhood is concerned with the flesh, and true freedom and equality with the surrender of one of the greatest prerogatives which woman ever possessed. They are false if judged by any other standard. Nineteen hundred years ago it was that St. Paul, in his letter to the Galatians, pointed out that in Christ Jesus there is no distinction of sex — there is neither Greek nor barbarian, neither male nor female. And in doing this he was but stressing a principle which our Blessed Savior had often inculcated — namely, that though the sons of Adam alone should bear the dignity of His eternal Priesthood, yet when there was question of personal salvation, or even of the spread of the kingdom of God upon earth, it was not sex that would count, but only personal holiness, the personal love of the individual heart for the Crucified Christ.

When we say that in Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female, we think first of our Blessed Mother Mary. It was natural, of course, that the Holy Spirit should turn to a daughter of Eve to assist the Triune Godhead in the Incarnation of the Eternal Word. But our Blessed Lord was not forced to associate that glorious Virgin with Himself so closely in the act of atonement that she would become the Coredemptress of men and the Mediatrix of every grace. Outstripping by far all human beings in holiness, in beauty and grace, it is to her, a woman, that we must look by the Savior's will if we would observe the most perfect of creatures, or, in the poet's own words, "our tainted nature's solitary boast."

How strikingly has the Pauline dictum that in Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female, been borne out in the annals of the Church! We may think of the history of monasticism alone. Scarcely had the Egyptian wastes been peopled with monks at the beginning of the fourth century when convents of women sprang up, in which the rigors of the Fathers of the desert were copied and their holiness imitated at every turn. "If thou wilt be perfect, go sell what thou hast . . . and come, follow Me," were the words addressed to the rich young man. But it was of another Mary that the Savior was speaking when He said that she had chosen the best part and that it would not be taken from her.

No period was there in the monastic development when women did not stand at the side of the great monastic leaders, vying with them, not only in their love of Christ, but likewise in their keen appreciation of the needs of the Church and of immortal souls. To speak of St. Jerome is to think of St. Paula. To mention St. Basil is to refer to St. Macrina. Coupled forever with the name of St. Benedict is that of St. Scholastica; with St. Patrick is St. Brigid; with St. Boniface, St. Walburga; with St. John of the Cross, St. Teresa; and with St. Francis of Assisi, the immortal St. Clare. Our age may boast of the women whose counsel is sought and treasured by the statesmen of the world. But which of them, we would ask, could ever be ranked with St. Catherine of Siena, for example, in discernment, in prudence and sagacity? An array of women scholars there is at this very moment, contributing to the fields of literature, science, and even philosophy. Which of them could be chosen, we may inquire, even to approach the great St. Teresa of Avila in wisdom, knowledge, and profoundness of thought? And were we to go on and mention womanly charm, which in this our day is judged by standards that even the pagans would disavow, what young woman, for all the glamor that wealth or the world may cast upon her, could reveal in her life even a fragment of the poetry and song that are manifest in the divine romance of her who was called Thérèse of the Child Jesus and the Holy Face?

Indeed it is on an occasion like this that we think of the great women of monastic history and of the religious Orders of women in the past and of their accomplishments. But above all, on an occasion like this, are we moved to ponder the sisterhoods as we know them today, and the inestimable blessings which they are conferring upon our civilization. If we make exception for the priesthood of Jesus Christ, with its sacramental powers, is there any force for good in our world today which can even remotely compare with our Sisters? To think of them is to think of the poor, the sick, and the afflicted, of the aged and the dying. It is to think of the helpless orphans and the thousands of little children who are trained to know and love God in the days of their youth. What matters it if men, through ignorance or malice, look askance at our parochial schools? We are aware that these schools are unexcelled in the contribution which they make to the morality and patriotism of our citizens. Nothing that is of merely ecclesiastical origin can outdo them in laying the foundation for eternal life. Is not the flourishing condition of the Church in America due in large measure to our parochial school system? But where would that system be were it not for these noble women, consecrated to Christ, who are willing to spend themselves amid the monotony and drudgery of the classroom? Words are weak, and phrases feeble, to tell what the Sisters are accomplishing. But we are happy to acknowledge our debt to them publicly on a day like this, and to speak of it in the presence of the Savior, Who alone knows the full story and Who alone appreciates their full value in His Mystical Body.

It is evident, of course, that everything which we say in praise of our sisterhoods applies to the Sisters of the Precious Blood, whose jubilee we are observing this morning. Those of us who know them well — how proud we are to be associated with them in the task of saving souls! Surely I shall not be accused of flattery if I say that no Congregation in our experience excels them in their love of prayer, in their love of work, and in their love of humility and self-effacement. How those good Sisters who are no longer among the living — who at this moment are enjoying the vision of God — how they loved to pray! It seemed that it was only prayer that was upon their lips — prayer of adoration of the Precious Blood, prayer to the Blessed Mother of God, prayer for the suffering souls, prayer for priests that they might be successful in the ministry. Especially we Fathers of the Precious Blood — never shall we know till we stand at the judgment seat of God how much we owe the attainment of our vocation to these good Sisters, who toiled so faithfully in our institutions and who could pray like the saints of God. Now if prayer is the foundation upon which all spiritual progress rests, is it any wonder that the Sisters have succeeded so magnificently in the hundred years which they have spent in America? And if prayer is the real key to the Heart of Christ, must it not be said of the Sisters that they too have chosen the best part and that it will not be taken from them?

Let us go on to ask: If Mother Brunner were here this morning, what would her reaction be? What advice would she give to her spiritual daughters? It is certain that she would be exceedingly happy at the progress which the Sisters have made. For in her eyes it would be proof that God's blessing is upon her institute, and evidence that great good is being done for immortal souls. She would be shocked, of course, noble soul that she was, at the condition of the modern world. The unbelief of our age would disquiet her. Pleasure she would see as the golden calf before which men bow in worship. With the wisdom of the saints she would discern that the godlessness of the world renders the temptations of those who would lead the perfect life greater and more threatening than ever before. It is on this very point perhaps that we need warning and are most open to censure. We do not realize sufficiently the corroding effect of the world upon us. The very air we breathe is heavy with secularism, and we do not see how baneful this is to our spiritual lives.

The world would remind the Sisters that we are living in a different century, that the simplicity and piety of a hundred years ago have been antiquated by the progress of our modern age. But Mother Brunner would reply that there are principles which are eternal and undying. Time does not change them, nor can progress lessen their force. The measure of our perfection is still the surrender which we make to Almighty God. We still must die to self in order to live with Christ. And the way to the Heart of Christ is forever the way of the cross. How quickly, of course, would Mother Brunner admit that her Sisters are living in the twentieth century and that its every good feature must be seized and shaped into an effective weapon for the conquest of souls. The progress which the Sisters have made in the field of education, for example, would delight her, and she would urge them to cherish academic standards which are rigid and high. In a word, she would have her Sisters to be as modern as is the Church, which moves through every century, acknowledging the best features of every age while retaining that ancient wisdom and that ancient form which prove indisputably that she is of God.

This morning, as we congratulate the Sisters on their anniversary, we pray earnestly that they may always retain the spirit and simplicity of their holy foundress. That spirit has sustained them in the past; it will fortify and invigorate them as the Congregation expands and grows. What does the future hold for them? The future, of course. is in the hands of God. Not even the role of a minor prophet, perhaps, should we essay. And yet there are signs in the heavens with regard to our times — signs which are there for all to read. Surely our world is growing more wicked, despite the purpose of amendment which falls at times from its lips. Into the ascendancy the powers of evil move, so that a great struggle is taking shape between the kingdom of evil and the kingdom of God upon earth. When the conflict breaks, on whom may the Church rely with greater confidence than upon her priests and religious? Even now must we gird ourselves for the fray. We must intensify our love of the Church; we must heighten our love of Christ. In the troubled days which surely will come upon us and which will form part of their second century in America, may the Sisters of the Precious Blood distinguish themselves as they have done in the past. May they go forth courageously and triumphantly to win an army of souls for Christ under their glorious banner — the banner of the Precious Blood.

TRIBUTE BY ARCHBISHOP JOHN T. McNICHOLAS

I bring to the Sisters of the Precious Blood the congratulations of each of us here and of all the priests of this diocese on the one hundredth anniversary of their coming to the United States.

I have been witness to the work of these Sisters for a fifth of a century; I have seen them in the discharge of their daily duties; and I can speak with an intimate knowledge of the spirit and work of these Sisters. I don't wish to repeat that which was so beautifully treated of in this morning's sermon — I merely wish to refer to a few outstanding facts of the history of the Congregation during the last quarter-century. Their institution has been raised to that of a pontifical character; they are children, in a spiritual way, subject to the jurisdiction of the Holy See. They have, in a marvelous spirit, developed their educational activities. They have erected a large central high school, which ranks among the finest in the archdiocese; during my administration they have gone to the far coast of California and have there erected a splendid academic institution. They have increased their work in the care of the aged. Doing all this work, this manifold work, they have remained the same simple, humble Sisters.

As Father Marling said in his sermon, your blessed foundress had in mind that you, dear Sisters, should be devout clients of our Blessed Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. That you are. She also wished that you cultivate devotion to the Precious Blood. That you do. She wished that you carry on the work of the seminary, of caring for the needs of the professors, of the student body, and of all those in charge of the salvation of souls. And that, likewise, you do. And she wished also that you carry on an educational program to meet the needs of the day. And that you are doing.

Your devotion to the Blessed Sacrament is well known throughout the diocese. This is a great shrine in honor of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. You are zealous in propagating devotion to the Precious Blood. Your work in the seminary is noted and most gratifying, and your educational work during the last twenty years has made progress by leaps and bounds. I know of no sisterhood that has made more progress in education than you have during these past twenty years; but during all that time your spirit has not changed. You Sisters have remained the constant adorers of Our Lord, propagators of devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. You still remain humble workers, constant workers. Humble — that you are. And I can say without the slightest fear of contradiction that your educational program and the knowledge that you Sisters have acquired have not spoiled you. Sometimes education spoils people, but it has not in the slightest degree spoiled the Sisters of the Precious Blood.

On an occasion of this kind, we are inclined to think back one hundred years ago, to 1844, of the glorious spirit of those pioneers, those dauntless souls who feared nothing. They were ready for everything. We often ask why this is. What is it that they had that we lack? First of all, I think they saw souls; they loved souls; they were ready to make sacrifices for them; they pushed every obstacle aside in the care of souls. We might well wish today that we had the spirit of the pioneers, but on an occasion like this, we may well be prepared to ask ourselves: What about 2044, a hundred years hence?

I really think that greater changes are in store for the world and for the Community of the Sisters of the Precious Blood during the coming hundred years than those that have taken place during the past century; but I know that whatever changes will come, if you persevere in the spirit you have today, you need not fear for the future. If you are as prayerful during this coming century; if you love souls as you love them today; if you are the same Sisters adorers of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament and propagators of devotion to the Precious Blood; if you continue to be humble workers; and if you refuse to let your education spoil you: you can face everything that is coming to us in the next century. We must love the dauntless spirit of the pioneers. And when I think of the revolutionary changes that face the whole world, the Church, the country; that face this diocese, this community, this Congregation and every other congregation, I can only hope that we shall be so armed, so strengthened spiritually, that we cannot fail in the crisis.

Sisters, on this blessed day, the anniversary of your foundation in America, I invoke God's blessing; and to my last breath of life, I assure you that I shall remember you daily in Holy Mass. Continue in your holy vocation, in your love of souls, and in your achievements in the future, my dear children, as you have in the past.

APPENDIX II

INSIGNIA OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE SISTERS OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

To commemorate the founding of their Congregation and to perpetuate its purpose, the Sisters of the Precious Blood on the occasion of their centenary adopted a coat of arms, which has been judged "aesthetically significant, peculiarly beautiful, and heraldically impeccable."[1] There are no weak lines, and the parts are balanced in such a way as to give beauty to the whole design.

The conventional lion, "which combines natural forms with impersonal beauty and expresses lithe strength, majesty, fortitude, and nobleness,"[2] was selected as the charge upon the shield to indicate the origin of the Congregation in castle Loewenberg and the practice of perpetual adoration of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, the true "Lion of the tribe of Juda," to Whom the members devoted themselves from the beginning. Since the noble lion is the king of beasts it remains uncrowned; it needs no special mark of royalty. The covered chalice, which it vigorously displays, represents the Precious Blood calling for continuous reparation. On its breast the lion bears a trefoil cross, signifying the relation of the members of the Congregation to the Blessed Trinity and their affiliation with the archdiocese of Cincinnati.

The field of blue symbolizes Mary, Mother of the "Lion of Juda" and the source of the Precious Blood; the spotless band, her Immaculate Conception, the glorious title under which the Congregation honors her in a special way.

Inscribed beneath is the motto, *Laus et Honor Sanguini Jesu,* expressing the primary purpose which brought the Congregation of the Precious Blood into existence. For more than a hundred years the members have been faithful to this motto by constantly endeavoring to give praise and honor to the Blood of Jesus through their teaching, their example, and above all, their uninterrupted vigils as Guards of Honor before the Sacrament of Love.[3]

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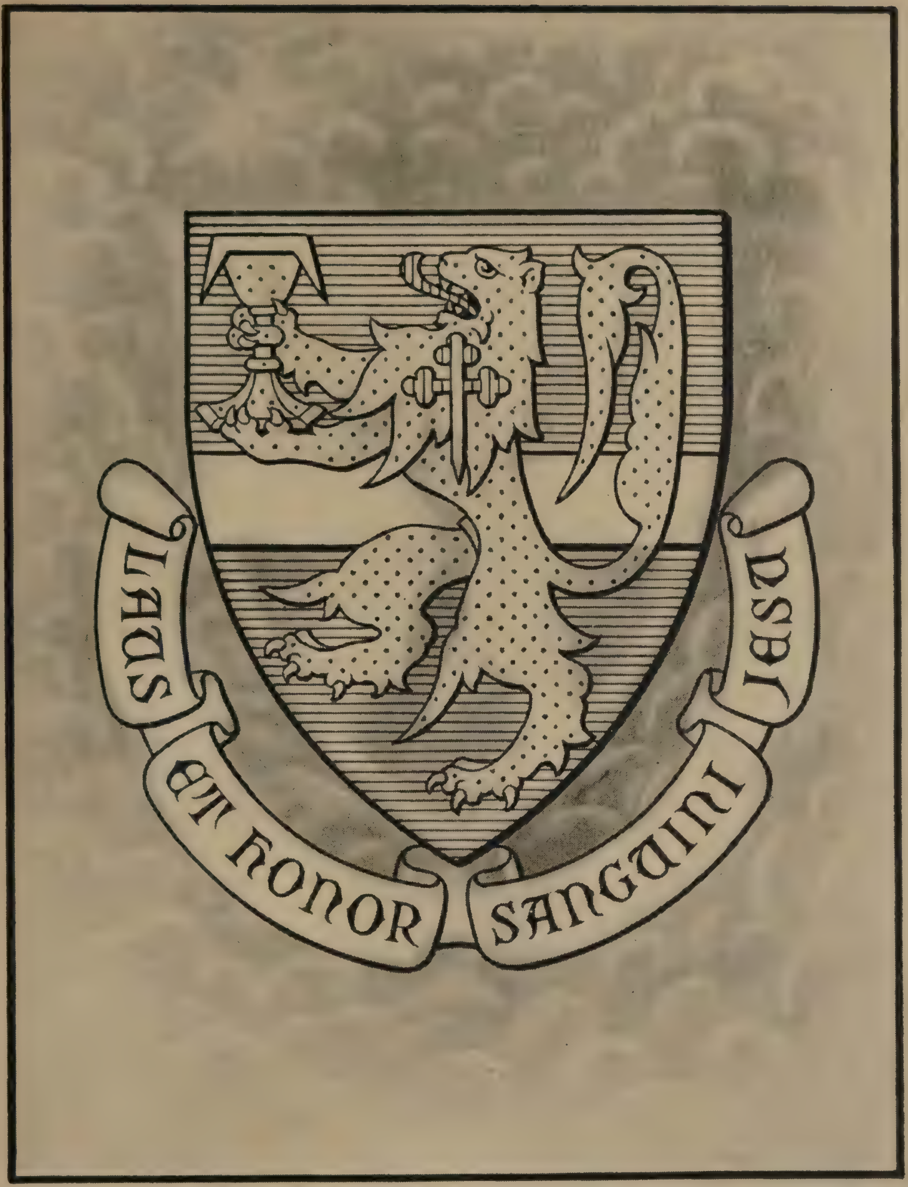
[1] Statement of Pierre de Chaignon la Rose of Boston, heraldic expert, who revised the original design produced by Sister M. Adelaide.

[2] Sister M. Adelaide.

[3] Based on the interpretation of the coat of arms as given by Sister M. Adelaide, the original designer.


LAUS
ET HONOR
SANGUINI
IESU

Insignia Sororum Congregationis Pretiosissimi Sanguinis
(1834-1944)

STATISTICS
OF THE
SISTERS OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD
1943-1944

Convent of Perpetual Exposition

Our Lady of the Precious Blood, Motherhouse of the Congregation of the Precious Blood, Salem Heights, Dayton, Ohio.

Professed Sisters	77
Novices	28
Postulants	15
Aspirants	21

Convents of Perpetual Adoration

1. Our Lady Help of Christians, Maria Stein, Ohio, 61 Sisters.
2. Our Lady of the Crib, New Riegel, Ohio, 32 Sisters.
3. Annunciation, Minster, Ohio, 13 Sisters.

Pilgrim House

Marywood, Ohio, 13 Sisters.

Sanitarium

Kneipp Springs, Rome City, Indiana, 50 Sisters.

Orphanage

St. Joseph, Dayton, Ohio, 14 Sisters.

Academy

San Luis Rey, San Luis Rey, California, 19 Sisters.

Home for the Aged

Maria-Joseph, Dayton, Ohio, 5 Sisters.

Domestic Supervision

Episcopal Residences:

1. The Most Reverend John T. McNicholas, Archbishop of Cincinnati, Norwood, Ohio, 6 Sisters.
2. The Most Reverend George J. Rehring, Auxiliary Bishop of Cincinnati, Hyde Park, Cincinnati, Ohio, 3 Sisters.
3. The Most Reverend Urban J. Vehr, Archbishop of Denver, Denver, Colorado, 3 Sisters.

Chancery:

Cincinnati Archdiocese, Cincinnati, Ohio, 5 Sisters.

Seminaries:

1. St. Charles, Carthagena, Ohio, 16 Sisters.
2. Brunnerdale, Canton, Ohio, 10 Sisters.
3. Mount St. Mary, Norwood, Ohio, 7 Sisters.
4. St. Gregory, Cincinnati, Ohio, 10 Sisters.

Novitiate:

St. Mary's Home, Burkettsville, Ohio, 4 Sisters.

College:

St. Joseph, Collegeville, Indiana, 21 Sisters.

High Schools

1. Immaculate Conception, Celina, Ohio, 4 Sisters.
2. Maria Stein Public, Maria Stein, Ohio, 1 Sister.
3. Minster Public, Minster, Ohio, 2 Sisters.
4. Precious Blood, Salem Heights, Dayton, Ohio, 8 Sisters.
5. Regina, Norwood, Ohio, 21 Sisters.
6. Russia Public, Russia, Ohio, 2 Sisters.
7. Sacred Heart, Sedalia, Missouri, 3 Sisters.
8. St. Joseph, Wapakoneta, Ohio, 6 Sisters.
9. St. Mary, Phoenix, Arizona, 7 Sisters.
10. Sts. Peter and Paul, Ottawa, Ohio, 5 Sisters.
11. San Luis Rey, San Luis Rey, California, 5 Sisters.

Grade Schools

Ohio:

1. Burkettsville Public, Burkettsville, Ohio, 2 Sisters.
2. Chickasaw Public, Chickasaw, Ohio, 2 Sisters.
3. Coldwater Public, Coldwater, Ohio, 8 Sisters.
4. Egypt Public, Egypt, Ohio, 2 Sisters.
5. Glandorf Public, Glandorf, Ohio, 3 Sisters.
6. Holy Name, Dayton, Ohio, 5 Sisters.
7. Holy Rosary, St. Mary's, Ohio, 4 Sisters.
8. Immaculate Conception, Botkins, Ohio, 3 Sisters.
9. Immaculate Conception, Celina, Ohio, 8 Sisters.
10. McCartyville Public, McCartyville, Ohio, 3 Sisters.
11. Maria Stein Public, Maria Stein, Ohio, 2 Sisters.
12. Mary Help of Christians, Fort Recovery, Ohio, 3 Sisters.
13. Minster Public, Minster, Ohio, 8 Sisters.
14. New Riegel Public, New Riegel, Ohio, 3 Sisters.
15. Ottoville Public, Ottoville, Ohio, 8 Sisters.
16. Our Lady of Good Counsel, Cleveland, Ohio, 19 Sisters.
17. Our Lady of Good Hope, Miamisburg, Ohio, 4 Sisters.
18. Our Lady of the Precious Blood, Salem Heights, Dayton, Ohio, 2 Sisters.
19. Resurrection, Dayton, Ohio, 6 Sisters.

20. Russia Public, Russia, Ohio, 3 Sisters.
21. St. Anthony, Columbus Grove, Ohio, 4 Sisters.
22. St. Barbara, Cloverdale, Ohio, 2 Sisters.
23. St. Denis, Versailles, Ohio, 2 Sisters.
24. St. Joseph Orphanage, Dayton, Ohio, 4 Sisters.
25. St. Joseph, Wapakoneta, Ohio, 6 Sisters.
26. St. Margaret Mary, North College Hill, Cincinnati, Ohio, 8 Sisters.
27. St. Mark, Cincinnati, Ohio, 9 Sisters.
28. St. Mary, Dayton, Ohio, 16 Sisters.
29. St. Michael, Marywood, Ohio, 3 Sisters.
30. St. Patrick, Troy, Ohio, 4 Sisters.
31. St. Peter, Alvada, Ohio, 2 Sisters.
32. Sts. Peter and Paul, Norwood, Ohio, 9 Sisters.
33. Sts. Peter and Paul, Ottawa, Ohio, 6 Sisters.

Missouri:

34. St. Mary, St. Joseph, Missouri, 4 Sisters.
35. St. Xavier, St. Joseph, Missouri, 7 Sisters.
36. Sacred Heart, Sedalia, Missouri, 5 Sisters.
37. St. Joseph Mission (Colored), Sedalia, Missouri, 1 Sister.

Indiana:

38. Holy Trinity, Bryant, Indiana, 2 Sisters.
39. St. Augustine, Rensselaer, Indiana, 3 Sisters.
40. Most Precious Blood, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 13 Sisters.

Arizona:

41. St. Mary, Phoenix, Arizona, 15 Sisters.
42. Sacred Heart (Mexican), Mesa, Maricopa County, Arizona, 4 Sisters.

California:

43. San Luis Rey, San Luis Rey, California, 4 Sisters.

APPENDIX III

A GENERAL SURVEY OF SOURCES

Most of the material used in writing this history has been gathered from firsthand sources, which were made available chiefly through the foresight of Father Francis de Sales Brunner. Just before setting sail for America he wrote from Havre on October 19, 1843, to the Sisters whom he had left behind at Loewenberg castle: "You could put all my letters unfolded in a book and save them, so that in future if you wish to refer to something you will be able to find it." Thus it became a tradition in the Congregation to keep all official correspondence for future reference. Similarly, many of the letters that Father Brunner had written in Switzerland before coming to America, as well as his journals and other papers, were collected and preserved by the Benedictine Fathers of Maria Stein Abbey in Switzerland. Some years after the death of Father Brunner, Abbot Charles Motchi, realizing the historical value of these documents, presented them to the Fathers of the Precious Blood in America.

ARCHIVAL SOURCES: Most of the originals of Father Brunner's letters and other documents are preserved either in the St. Charles Archives (*sca*), Carthagena, Ohio, or in the Salem Heights Archives (*sha*), Dayton, Ohio. The National Archives at Notre Dame, Indiana (*nda*), afforded several photostatic copies of letters addressed to Bishop Fenwick and Archbishop Purcell. Further material was found in the Cincinnati Archdiocesan Archives (*caa*), which contain the letters written by the Fathers of the Precious Blood to the ordinary, especially between the years 1845-1877. Source material for Part III of this history, which treats of the more recent development of the Sisters' community since its separation from the Fathers of the Precious Blood, was found in the numerous letters addressed to members of the Congregation by prelates, priests, and others whose interests were bound up with those of the Congregation. The originals of most of these letters are preserved in the Salem Heights Archives. These archives also contain the annals of the Congregation and various other records and documents to which specific reference will be made in the Notes.

PERIODICALS: A valuable source of information on the history of the Congregation is *Nuntius Aulae,* originally the official organ of the Fathers of the Precious Blood. The German numbers which were issued twice a year from 1890-1898 contain the *Chronik* of the Congregation, a series of articles gleaned from the original historical documents preserved in the archives. *Nuntius Aulae* was discontinued until 1917, when it appeared for the first time in English. Since that time it has been in the hands of the students of St. Charles' Seminary, who have published a series of articles treating of different phases of the history of the Congregation. Reference was also made to the German periodical, *Herold des kostbaren Blutes,* published since 1925 by the Fathers of the Precious Blood, Feldkirch, Austria.

The columns of the *Catholic Telegraph* (now the *Telegraph-Register*) were consulted for the years 1844-1936. The titles of other papers and magazines to which less frequent reference was made, will appear at the beginnings of the chapters or in the Notes.

PRINTED BOOKS: No complete history of the Congregation of the Precious Blood has appeared up to the present time. Most of the printed works listed in the Notes pertain rather to the background history than to the specific development of the Congregation.

NOTES ON THE TEXT

PART ONE

(pages 1-101)

CHAPTER I

AUTHORITIES: Francis de Sales Brunner, *Die letzten Augenblicke, die hinterlassenen Lehren und das selige Hinsheiden einer frommen Mutter* (abbr. *Einer frommen Mutter*), Luzern, 1850, for the life and virtues of Mother Brunner.

Familienschein von Adam Probst, and *Familienschein, Brunner: Probst, Joh. Baptist,* both given at Muemliswil, Switzerland, Jan. 8, 1936.

Carlton J. H. Hayes, *A Political and Social History of Modern Europe,* Vol. II, New York, 1921, and

Henry Cabot Lodge, ed., *The History of the Nations,* Vol. XIII, New York, 1928, for the political situation in Switzerland during and after the French Revolution.

Max Walter, *Ortsgeschichtliches ueber Muemliswil-Ramiswil,* Olten, 1933, contains a scholarly treatment of the topographical features and of the history of Mother Brunner's native town.

Hilaire Belloc, *The Path to Rome,* New York, 1915, transmits the magic of the Alps.

Catholic Encyclopedia (abbr. *Cath. Encyc.*), XV, New York, 1913, for the article "Weingarten."

[1] *Einer frommen Mutter,* p. 73.

[2] Hilaire Belloc, *The Path to Rome,* pp. 180-181.

[3] Walter, *Ortsgeschichtliches ueber Muemliswil-Ramiswil,* "Vorwort," p. 5.

[4] *Ibid.,* pp. 18-22. Cf. also, Letter, Ernst Zbinden, Solothurn, Switzerland, Mar. 5, 1939, to Sister M. Octavia, Norwood, O., *sha570.*

[5] Although Father Brunner consistently called his mother "Anna Maria," her birth certificate reads "Maria Anna."

[6] *Einer frommen Mutter,* p. 39.

[7] *Familienschein von Adam Probst.*

[8] *Einer frommen Mutter,* p. 39.

[9] *Familienschein, ut supra.*

[10] *Einer frommen Mutter,* pp. 39-40.

[11] *Ibid.,* p. 36.

[12] *Ibid.,* p. 37.

[13] *Ibid.,* p. 22.

[14] *Ibid.,* p. 41.

[15] Letter, Ernst Zbinden, Solothurn, Switzerland, Mar. 5, 1939, to Sister M. Octavia, Norwood, O., *sha570.*

[16] Lodge, *The History of the Nations,* XIII, 503.

[17] *Familienschein, Brunner: Probst, Joh. Baptist.*

[18] *Einer frommen Mutter,* p. 27.

[19] *Ibid.,* p. 50.

[20] *Ibid.,* p. 79.

[21] *Ibid.,* p. 23.

[22] *Ibid.,* p. 76.

[23] *Ibid.,* p. 75.

[24] *Ibid.,* p. 63.

[25] *Ibid.*, pp. 17, 20.
[26] *Ibid.*, p. 50.
[27] *Ibid.*, p. 28.
[28] *Ibid.*, pp. 50-51.
[29] *Ibid.*, p. 41.
[30] *Ibid.*, p. 34.
[31] *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78.
[32] Proverbs XXXL, 20.
[33] *Einer frommen Mutter*, pp. 55-56.
[34] Dante, *Purgatorio*, Canto II, 27-28.
[35] *Einer frommen Mutter*, p. 48.
[36] *Ibid.*, p. 66.
[37] *Cath. Encyc.*, XV, "Weingarten," p. 576.
[38] *Einer frommen Mutter*, pp. 66-67.
[39] *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.
[40] Hayes, *A Political and Social History of Modern Europe*, II, 516 ff.
[41] Walter, *op. cit.*, p. 43.
[42] *Einer frommen Mutter*, p. 75.
[43] *Ibid.*, p. 23.
[44] Translated from copy found on inside cover of Father Brunner's *Tagebuch* I.
[45] *Einer frommen Mutter*, pp. 23-24.

CHAPTER II

The chief source for the early religious life of Father Brunner as a Benedictine at Maria Stein Abbey is his own *Tagebuch* (*sca*), 7 vols., covering the years 1816-1823. It is preserved in manuscript form. The original title *Tagebuch* will be used in the Notes to designate this early diary, while the translated title *Journal* (abbr. *Jo.*) will be employed for the four diaries of his travels. The first biography of Father Brunner, *Leben und Wirken des hochwuerdigen P. Franz Sales Brunner apostolischen Missionaers und Gruenders der Kloester der Congregation vom Kostbaren Blute in Nordamerika* (abbr. *Leben und Wirken*), Carthagena, O., 1882, published anonymously, is not always authentic in its statements. A more reliable authority is J. J. Simonet, *P. Franz Mar. Salesius Brunner apostol. Missionaer in Graubuenden und seine Mutter Anna Maria Brunner-Propst, Stifterin der Schwestern vom Kostbaren Blute*, Chur, 1935, but since he had no access to the original documents preserved in America, the sketch is necessarily incomplete. The best source for the years of Father Brunner's life immediately following his departure from Maria Stein (1829-1832) is, of course, his letters. P. Laurentius Eschle's *Geschichte der Wallfahrt und des Klosters Maria Stein*, Solothurn, 1896, is a reliable history of the famous shrine and abbey.

[1] Eschle, *Geschichte der Wallfahrt und des Klosters Maria Stein*, pp. 9-14.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 43-45.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 68, 74-75.
[4] *Tagebuch* III, p. 126.
[5] *Leben und Wirken*, p. 10.
[6] Original manuscripts preserved in archives of St. Charles' Seminary.
[7] *Tagebuch* I, p. 13, *et passim*.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 123; II, p. 83.
[9] *Ibid.*, pp. 92, 170, 390.
[10] *Tagebuch* II, pp. 314, 338, 396.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 397 ff.; III, p. 112 ff.
[12] *Tagebuch* IV, p. 148.

[13] Abbot of Maria Stein, elected 1873.

[14] *Nuntius Aulae,* IV:18, Sept. 1893.

[15] Brunner, *Die geheimnisvolle Hand der reinsten Liebe,* Oelenberg, 1830, pamphlet, *sba.*

[16] *Nuntius Aulae,* IV:18, Sept. 1893.

[17] *Ibid.,* p. 17.

[18] Brunner, *Berichte,* June 19, 1829, *scaa4.*

[19] *Ibid.,* June 23, 1829, *scaa4.*

[20] *Ibid.*

[21] *Nuntius Aulae,* IV:24-26, Apr. 1893.

[22] *Ibid.*

[23] *Ibid.,* p. 23.

[24] Letter, Placidus, Maria Stein, Dec. 26, 1837, to Brunner, Loewenberg, *scab10.* In the quotation at the end, Placidus is paraphrasing Isaias I, 2.

[25] *Jo.* III, p. 103. To designate Freiburg, Baden, the German spelling will be used, *Fribourg* being retained to indicate the canton and city in Switzerland.

[26] Brunner, *Berichte,* July 27, 1830, *scaa4.*

[27] Letter, Brunner, Oelenberg, May 23, 1830, to Placidus, *scaa6.*

[28] Brunner, 1 *Beilage,* July 2, 1830, *scaa6.*

[29] Brunner, 2 *Beilage,* July 11, 1830, *scaa7.*

[30] Brunner, *Berichte, loc. cit.* He quotes the last text freely; it should read: *A Domino factum est istud et . . . oculis nostris.* Cf. Ps. CXVII, 23.

[31] Letter, Brunner, en route to Oelenberg, Aug. 29, 1830, to Placidus, *scaa8.*

[32] *Ibid.*

[33] Letter, Brunner, Ettingen, Sept. 14, 1830, to Placidus, *scaa8.*

[34] Letter, Brunner, Langenthal, Oct. 13, 1830, to Placidus, *scaa9.*

[35] *Ibid.*

[36] Letter, Brunner, Lucerne, . . . 1830, to Placidus, *scaa4.*

[37] Letter, Brunner, Muemliswil, Mar. 6, 1831, to Placidus, *scaa13.*

[38] Letter, Salzmann, Solothurn, Feb. 3, 1831, *scaa13.*

[39] Letter, Placidus, Maria Stein, Mar. 18, 1831, to Fenwick, Cincinnati, O., *nda.*

[40] Letter, Brunner, Dub, Mar. 6, 1831, to Placidus, *scaa13.*

[41] Letter, Brunner, Lucerne, Apr. 7, 1831, to Placidus, *scaa14;* also from Tomils, June 16 and July 20, 1831, *scaa15.*

[42] Letter, Brunner, Tomils, May 17-20, 1831, to Placidus, *scaa15;* also letters, June 16 and 19, 1831, *scaa15.*

[43] Letter, Brunner, . . . n. d., to Placidus, *scaa12.*

[44] Simonet, *P. Franz Mar. Salesius Brunner,* "Vorrede," p. 11.

[45] Anno 1835, die 25 Feb.

Heri baptizatus est infantulus Dni Cristophori Thomera 4 mensium qui absque vita natus fuit die 23 et die 24 in Ecclesia St. Sepulchri per intercessionem B. M. Mariae a R. Pat. Salesii baptizatus et hodie a me ut supra tumulatus est in Cöemeterio St. AP. Thomae, etc.

Parochus loci:
Rev. Laurentius Mareischen

Ex Libre defunctorum Parochiae Saviesii de anno 1647 usque nunc.

[46] Simonet, *op. cit.,* section VIII: "Zur Charakterisierung Brunners," p. 42 ff.

[47] Letter, Brunner, Tomils, Oct. 7, 1831, to Placidus, *scaa17.*

CHAPTER III

Only secondary sources were available for the history of Loewenberg castle. Father Placidus Baselgia, the chaplain at Loewenberg Institute for years, wrote an account based on Guler, an extract of which was published in *Nuntius Aulae,* V, Oct. 1894; it differs in some details from Simonet's sketch, based on Tuor: *Das Schloss und die Weissenanstalt Loewenberg,* Chur, 1890.

[1]*Cath. Encycl.*, III, "Chur," p. 743.

[2]Simonet, *op. cit.*, p. 123, mentions dynasty of Donat von Vaz in the thirteenth century. Since he had no male issue, he bequeathed the castle to his daughter, Ursula von Vaz, who married Werdenberg-Sargans. He sold it (1429) to Lumerins, who held it 64 years and then sold it (1493) to Aegidius von Mont.

[3]Baselgia, *Geschichte des Schlosses Loewenberg,* extract in *Nuntius Aulae,* V:122-126, Oct. 1894.

[4]Letter, Brunner, Ilanz, Jan. 29, 1832, to Placidus, *scaa2.*

[5]Description given to Sister M. Adelaide Walz by Gieri Casura (and his sister Anna), whose godfather was Rudolph von Mont, son of the baron who sold Castle Loewenberg to Father Brunner.

[6]Letter, Brunner, Trons, Jan. 15, 1832, to Placidus, *scaa19.*

[7]Letter, Brunner, Alvennei, Feb. 22, 1832, to Placidus, *scaa19.*

[8]Letter, Brunner, Tomils, Mar. 4, 1832, to Placidus, *scaa20.*

[9]Syllabus of Loewenberg Institute, *scaa21.*

[10]Letter, Brunner, Schleuis, May 26, 1832, to Placidus, *scaa22.*

[11]Baron von Mont-Brunner Contract, Loewenberg, Aug. 23, 1832, *scaa25.*

[12]Letter, Brunner, Schleuis, May 26, 1832, to Placidus, *scaa22.*

[13]Letter, Brunner, Lombrein, Mar. 17, 1832, to Placidus; also from Trons, Mar. 25, 1832, *scaa20.*

[14]Letter, Brunner, Schleuis, May 26, 1832, to Placidus, *scaa22.*

[15]Letter, Brunner, Chur, July 23, 1832, to Placidus, *scaa24.*

[16]Letter, Brunner, Schleuis, Sept. 1, 1832, to Baal, Chur, *scaa26.*

[17]Letter, Brunner, Schleuis, Oct. 15, 1832, to Baal, Chur, *scaa27.*

[18]Letter, Brunner, Schleuis, Oct. 22, 1832, to Baal, Chur, *scaa27;* also Nov. 8, 1832, *scaa28.*

[19]Jack Everglade, *Ancestral Lineage of Brunner from Baptist Brunner, 1729. to Paul Philip Brunner, 1936,* MS., *sha.*

[20]Simonet, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

[21]Letter, Sister Mary Scholastica, Dietramszell, Dec. 10, 1838, to Francis de Sales Brunner, Basle, *sha133.*

[22]Letter, Soeur Louise-Raphael Quenet, Fribourg, Switzerland, Mar. 9, 1934, to Sisters of the Precious Blood, Dayton, O., *sha465;* cf. Simonet, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

[23]*Einer frommen Mutter,* p. 2.

[24]*The Catholic Universe,* XXI, Oct. 14, 1898; cf. *Cath. Encyc.*, V, "Einsiedeln," p. 367.

[25]*Einer frommen Mutter,* p. 2.

[26]Brunner, *Die Priester und Brueder, C. PP. S.. und ihre Missionshaeuser in Nordamerika,* p. 21, MS., *sha.*

[27]Letter, Brunner, Schleuis, May 26, 1832, to Placidus, *scaa22.*

[28]*Einer frommen Mutter,* p. 9.

[29]Brunner, *Addendum: Uebergabe und Willenserklaerung,* Dec. 7, 1832, *scaa29.*.

[30]Letter, Brunner, Schleuis, Dec. 1, 1832, to Placidus, *scaa28.*

[31]Letter, Brunner, Schleuis, Dec. 6, 1832, to Baal, Chur, *scaa30.*

[32]Brunner, *Inventarium,* Dec. 7, 1832, *scaa29.*

[33]Brunner, *Addendum: Uebergabe und Willenserklaerung,* Dec. 7, 1832, *scaa29.*

[34]Letter, Brunner, Chur, Dec. 8, 1832, to Placidus, *scaa30.*

CHAPTER IV

The source for the life of Blessed Gaspar del Bufalo and the account of the rise and spread of devotion to the Precious Blood in Rome: *The Herald of* *the Precious Blood,* Messenger Press, Carthagena, 1933, is adapted from the Italian of Monsignor Vincent Sardi by an anonymous member of the Congregation. It is not, of course, a firsthand authority.

[1] Letter, Mother Brunner, Rome, Feb. 26, 1833, to her children, Switzerland, in *Einer frommen Mutter,* pp. 116-117.

[2] *The Herald of the Precious Blood,* p. 48.

[3] *Ibid.,* p. 52.

[4] *Ibid.,* p. 85.

[5] Brunner, *Gruss und Segensworte an die Brueder und Schwestern der Erzbruderschaft des Kostbarsten Blutes Jesu Christi,* Einsiedeln, 1845, pp. 3-4.

By 1830 there were more than 150 Confraternities of the Precious Blood spread throughout Europe, Africa, Asia (Armenia, India, China), and the United States. In all there were more than 1,000 priests with faculties to enroll members. Cf. *The Herald of the Precious Blood,* "Introduction," pp. 4-5.

[6] Founder of the Pallottini Fathers.

[7] *Priester und Brueder,* pp. 9-10.

[8] *Einer frommen Mutter,* p. 70.

[9] *Ibid.,* pp. 43-45, 3-4.

[10] Letter, Brunner, Rome, Dec. 28, 1832, to Baal, Chur, *scaa30.*

[11] Letter, Brunner, Rome, Feb. 17, 1833, to Baal, Chur, *scaa31.*

[12] Letter, Brunner, Rome, Dec. 28, 1832, to Baal, Chur, *scaa30.*

[13] Letter, Brunner, Kazzis, Mar. 13, 1833, to Baal, Chur, *scaa32.*

[14] Letter, Brunner, Olten, Mar. 27, 1833, to Baal, Chur, *scaa33.*

[15] Letter, Brunner, Loewenberg, Apr. 24, 1833, to Baal, Chur, *scab2.*

[16] Letter, Brunner, Genoa, May 11, 1833, to Baal, Chur, *scaa35.*

[17] Letter, Brunner, Genoa, May 27, 1833, to Baal, Chur, *scaa35.*

[18] Letter, Brunner, Loewenberg, June 8, 1833, to Baal, Chur, *scaa37.*

[19] Letter, Brunner, Loewenberg, July 9, 1833, to Baal, Chur, *scaa37.*

[20] Letter, Brunner, Genoa, Aug. 2, 1833, to Baal, Chur, *scaa37.*

[21] *Einer frommen Mutter,* pp. 70-71.

[22] Letter, Brunner, Genoa, May 11, 1833, to Baal, Chur, *scaa35.*

[23] *Decretum S. Congregationis de Propaganda Fide, Pedizini, Datum Romae, die 11 Septembris,* 1833, *scaa39.*

[24] *Einer frommen Mutter,* p. 13.

CHAPTER V

Besides the sources previously noted, the main contemporary authority on the foundation of the Sisters of the Precious Blood and the early community life at Loewenberg is *Notizen ueber die Versammlung der deutschen Schwestern vom Kostbaren Blute im Schlosse Loewenberg in der Schweitz Churer Bistum* (abbr. *Notizen*). A valuable document, it is a manuscript by "one of the Sisters in the castle," written between Dec. 1849, and Mar. 1850. Father Brunner's manuscript, *Die Priester und Brueder. C. PP. S., und ihre Missionshaeuser in Nordamerika* (abbr. *Priester und Brueder*), to which reference has been made previously, is a summary of the history of the Congregation from the beginning, but as he himself acknowledges, he wrote it more for edification than for a faithful portrayal of facts.

[1] "Praise and honor to the Blood of Jesus," the motto of the community.

[2] *Priester und Brueder,* p. 11.

[3] *Einer frommen Mutter,* p. 9.

[4] *Priester und Brueder,* p. 11.

[5] Brunner, *Lebensordnung der armen Schwestern,* Loewenberg, 1835, MS., *sha.*
[6] *Notizen,* pp. 3-4, *sha;* cf. *Einer frommen Mutter,* pp. 88-89.
[7] *Ibid.,* p. 6.
[8] *Ibid.*
[9] *Ibid.,* p. 42.
[10] *Ibid.,* pp. 6-7; cf. *Notizen,* p. 4.
[11] Original document, given at Chur, May 30, 1833, signed J. J. Baal, *scaa36.*
[12] *Einer frommen Mutter,* p. 88.
[13] Psalm xxv, 8.
[14] Cf. I, 2, p. 24f.
[15] Letter, Brunner, St. Morand, May 9, 1835, to Placidus, *scaa41.*
[16] *Nuntius Aulae,* VI:111-112, Apr. 1895.
[17] *Einer frommen Mutter,* p. 8.
[18] *Record of Sisters of the Precious Blood,* p. 22.
[19] *Einer frommen Mutter,* p. 9.
[20] *Ibid.,* p. 15 *et passim.*
[21] *Ibid.,* p. 51.
[22] *Ibid.,* p. 31.
[23] *Ibid.,* pp. 123-132.
[24] *Ibid.,* pp. 53-54.
[25] *Ibid.,* p. 87.
[26] *Ibid.,* p. 54.
[27] *Ibid.,* p. 73.
[28] *Ibid.,* p. 82.
[29] *Ibid.,* p. 83.
[30] *Ibid.*
[31] *Ibid.*
[32] *Ibid.,* p. 84.
[33] *Ibid.,* p. 87.
[34] *Ibid.,* pp. 88-90.
[35] *Ibid.,* pp. 92-93.
[36] *Ibid.,* p. 99.
[37] *Ibid.,* pp. 106-7: extract from the funeral address.
[38] *Ibid.,* pp. 108-9.
[39] *Notizen,* p. 2; cf. *Priester und Brueder,* p. 12.

Chapter VI

The work which is considered the best authority on the life of Bishop Lachat is Th. Graf Scherer Boccard, "Eugenius Lachat," in *Deutschlands Episcopat in Lebensbildern,* Wuerzburg, 1873.

[1] Brunner, *Complaints and Answers* (original cannot be found), MS., *sca309.*
[2] Brunner, *Novena S. Joseph, die 15a Martii, 1836, scaa42.*
[3] Letter, Brunner, Loewenberg, July 19, 1836, to Placidus, *scaa45.*
[4] Letter, Castracane, Rome, July 1, 1836, to Brunner, *scaa45.*
[5] Letter, Brunner, . . . July 19, 1836, to Placidus, *scaa45.*
[6] *Status realis Instituti Loewenberg, scaa42.*
[7] Letter, Brunner, Saugern, Feb. 4, 1837, to Placidus, *scab1.*
[8] Letter, Brunner, Vendelincourt, Apr. 3, 1837, to Placidus, *scab2.*
[9] Letter, Brunner, Vendelincourt, May 11, 1837, to Elizabeth Meisen, Loewenberg, *sha008.*
[10] Letter, Brunner, Vendelincourt, May 19, 1837, to Father Sylvester, Loewenberg, *scab3.*
[11] Letter, Brunner, Vendelincourt, Aug. 23, 1837, to Placidus, *scab6.*
[12] Letter, Brunner, Vendelincourt, Aug. 25, 1837, to Placidus, *scab6.*

[13] Letter, Placidus, Maria Stein, Aug. 29, 1837, to Brunner, Vendelincourt, *scab7.*

[14] Letter, Brunner, Loewenberg, Oct. 2, 1837, to Placidus, *scab8.*

[15] Letter, Abbot Peter of Oelenberg, to Hr. Cuttat, who sent it to Brunner, and he in turn to Placidus; cf. *Nuntius Aulae,* VI: 117, Oct. 1895.

[16] Letter, Placidus, Maria Stein, Dec. 26, 1837, to Brunner, *scab10.*

[17] Letter, Rudolph . . . , Solothurn, Dec. 29, 1837, to Brunner; describes sad state of Church in Switzerland.

[18] Cf. Letter, N. 11 *supra, scab8.*

[19] Brunner, *Pro Memoria,* Dec. 5, 1837, *scab7.*

[20] *Jo.* IV, p. 6.

[21] *Pro Memoria,* Mar. 9, 1838, *scab7.*

[22] Letter, Stiefenhofer, May 24, 1838, to Placidus, *scab14;* Stiefenhofer quotes Brunner.

[23] *Leben und Wirken,* p. 22.

[24] Testimonial to Father Brunner, C. PP. S., signed by Blase Valentini, Director General, and John Merlini, Secretary General, Rome, June 4, 1838, *scab14.*

[25] Document of Secularization given by the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, Apr. 1, 1838, and fully executed by Bishop John George Bossi, Chur, July 10, 1838, *scab15.*

[26] Document, Blase Valentini, Rome, Sept. 27, 1838, *scab17.*

[27] *Priester und Brueder,* pp. 12-13.

[28] *Ibid.*

[29] Letter, Brunner, Eschenweiler, Oct. 5, 1838, to Zimberlin, Ruesheim, *scab17.*

[30] Copy of Circular Letter, Laurent, Vic. Gen., Strassburg, sent by Lutz, Muelhausen, Nov. 14, 1838, to Muess, Habsheim, *scab18.*

[31] Letter, Laurent, Strassburg, Nov. 24, 1838, to Brunner, Eschenweiler, *scab18.*

[32] Letter, Brunner, Wesen, St. Gallen, Dec. 4, 1838, to Zimberlin, Ruesheim, *scab18.*

[33] Letter, Valentini, Rome, Dec. 17, 1838, to Brunner, Loewenberg, *scab18.*

[34] *Priester und Brueder,* p. 14.

[35] Scherer Boccard, "Eugenius Lachat," *loc. cit.,* pp. 53-180.

[36] Letter, Brunner, Loewenberg, Aug. 26, 1839, "To Whom It May Concern," *scab23.*

[37] Letter, Merlini, Albano, Dec. 10, 1840, to Brunner, Loewenberg, *scab25.*

[38] *Priester und Brueder,* pp. 14-18.

[39] *Ibid.,* pp. 19-21; cf. Letter, Brunner, Valz, n. d., to Sisters, Loewenberg, *scab3.*

[40] Brunner, *Unterschriftspapier fuer Missionshause* (*Loewenberg*), Nov. 1, 1839, in *Nuntius Aulae,* VIII:141, Mar. 1897; cf. Simonet, p. 31.

[41] Letter, Brunner, Loewenberg, Mar. 18, 1839, to Zimberlin, Ruesheim, *scab21;* cf. Note, *Nuntius Aulae,* VIII:138, Mar. 1897.

[42] Letter, Valentini, Rome, Dec. 5, 1840, to Brunner, Loewenberg, *scab25.*

[43] *Nuntius Aulae,* VIII:143, Mar. 1897; orig. MS. in Roman Archives.

[44] *Nuntius Aulae,* VIII:141-142, Mar. 1897; *ibid.* (English issue), II:119-123, July, 1919.

[45] Brunner, *Unterschreibung fuer St. Odilienberg, scab22.*

[46] Hyacinth Petroni, "Drei Aehren (Trois epis)," *Nuntius Aulae,* VI:102-105, Apr. 1895.

Chapter VII

Reverend John H. Lamott's *History of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati* (*1821-1921*), Cincinnati, 1921, is the chief source for the early history of the Church in Ohio; and for the settlement of Ohio, Carl Wittke, ed., *The History of the*

State of Ohio, Columbus, 1942, 6 vols.: Vol. I, Beverley W. Bond, Jr., *The Foundations of Ohio,* 1941; and Vol. II, William T. Utter, *The Frontier State 1803-1825.* A detailed account of the first voyage to America is found in *Journal* I, *sha.*

[1] Utter, *Frontier State,* p. 78.

[2] Lamott, *History of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati,* pp. 49-50.

[3] *Ibid.,* pp. 118-19, 122.

[4] *Ibid.,* p. 80.

[5] *Priester und Brueder,* p. 30.

[6] Letter, Brunner, Loewenberg, July 10, 1843, to Valentini, Rome, *scac1.*

[7] Letter, Brunner, Loewenberg, July 8, 1843, to Valentini, Rome, *scac1.*

[8] Letter, Brunner, Loewenberg, July 10, 1843, to Valentini, Rome, *scac1.*

[9] Letter, Brunner, Loewenberg, Aug. 28, 1843, to Santarelli, Rome, *scac1.*

[10] *Priester und Brueder,* pp. 31-32. (Cf. Letter, Brunner, Drei Aehren, Oct. 2, 1843, to Sisters, Loewenberg, in *Nuntius Aulae,* VIII:249-250, Mar. 1897.)

[11] *Ibid.,* p. 30.

[12] *Jo.* I, pp. 1-2.

[13] Letter, Brunner, Basle, Oct. 5, 1843, to Jos. Butz, Loewenberg, *scab33.*

[14] Letter, Brunner, Drei Aehren, Sept. 24, 1843, to Sisters, Loewenberg, *sha014* (orig. gives Oct. 24, which is evidently an error).

[15] *Priester und Brueder,* pp. 32-33; cf. *Jo.* I, pp. 2-3.

[16] Letter, Brunner, Havre, Oct. 17, 1843, to Sisters, Loewenberg, *sha012;* cf. *Jo.* I, pp. 3-4.

[17] *Ibid.,* p. 5.

[18] Abbot Placidus had died in 1841.

[19] *Jo.* III, p. 106. This picture hangs at present in the main corridor of the Motherhouse of the Sisters of the Precious Blood, Salem Heights, Dayton, O.

[20] *Priester und Brueder,* pp. 34-35.

[21] *Jo.* I, pp. 6, 9-11; cf. *Priester und Brueder,* pp. 35-36.

[22] Letter, Brunner, Sur la Mer, Nov. 3, 1843, to Purcell, Cincinnati, O., *nda.* The date of departure was evidently later inserted in the letter.

[23] Coleridge, *Ancient Mariner,* stanza 28.

[24] *Priester und Brueder,* pp. 36-39. (Cf. Letter, Brunner, en route, Nov. 14, 1843, to Sisters, Loewenberg, *sha015a.*)

[25] *Ibid.,* pp. 39-48.

[26] *Ibid.,* pp. 49-52; cf. *Jo.* I, pp. 15-16.

[27] Cornelius E. Smith, "The Christmas of '43," *Nuntius Aulae,* I:51-54, Dec. 1917.

[28] *Priester und Brueder,* pp. 56-57. (Cf. *Jo.* I, pp. 19-20.)

[29] *Ibid.,* pp. 58-64. (Cf. *Jo.* I, pp. 17-18.)

[30] *Ibid.,* pp. 65-67.

[31] *Ibid.*

PART TWO

(pages 103-235)

CHAPTER I

Besides Father Brunner's *Priester und Brueder,* cited before, Reverend George F. Houck's, *A History of Catholicity in Northern Ohio and in the Diocese of Cleveland from 1749 to December 31, 1900,* Cleveland, 1903, 2 vols., is the authority for the early history of St. Alphonse's parish, Peru, Ohio. The *Chronik der Schwestern-Versammlung vom Kostbaren Blute gegruendet A. D. 1834* (abbr. *Chronik*), which was started in 1872, many years after the foundation, by Father Kilian Schill the historian of the Congregation and continued by Sister Mary Clementine Enneking, contains verbatim Father Brunner's account of the early history. The first volume of the chronicle is, therefore, not a contemporary authority, and a number of errors, due to oversights on the part of the scribe, were noted. In the main, however, it is a reliable source.

[1] *Priester und Brueder,* pp. 73-80.

[2] *Ibid.,* pp. 81-87. (Cf. Houck, *History of Catholicity in Northern Ohio,* p. 40, and *Catholic Telegraph,* X, July 17, 1841.)

[3] *Ibid.,* p. 68.

[4] *Ibid.,* pp. 68-71.

[5] *Ibid.,* pp. 101-103.

[6] Letter, Brunner, St. Alphonse, O., Mar. 15, 1844, to Sisters, Loewenberg, *sha016,* gives 80 acres of arable land and 30 acres of woodland.

[7] *Priester und Brueder,* pp. 126-127.

[8] Letter, Brunner, St. Alphonse, O., Sept. 25, 1844, to Loewenberg, *sha018.*

[9] *Priester und Brueder,* p. 128.

[10] Letter, Brunner, St. Alphonse, O., July 22, 1844, to Butz, Loewenberg, in *Chronik* I, pp. 154-156; cf. also p. 157.

[11] Circular letter of appeal, Mother Mary Ann Albrecht, Maria Stein, Jan. 3, 1845, MS. fragment, *sha134.* Also printed *in toto* in Brunner, *Gruss und Segensworte,* pp. 44-46.

[12] *Priester und Brueder,* p. 128.

[13] *Catholic Telegraph,* XIII, Aug. 31, 1844.

[14] Letter, Brunner, St. Alphonse, O., n. d., to Elizabeth Meisen, Loewenberg, *sha019; cf. Priester und Brueder,* p. 127.

[15] Letter, Brunner, St. Alphonse, O., Sept. 25, 1844, to Loewenberg, *sha018.*

[16] Letter, Brunner, St. Alphonse, O., Oct. . . , 1844, to Sisters, Loewenberg, *sha019.*

[17] Letter, Brunner, St. Alphonse, O., Oct. 28, 1844, to Elizabeth Meisen, Loewenberg, *sha021.*

[18] Circular, Mother Mary Ann Albrecht; cf. N. 11 *supra.*

[19] *Ibid.,* pp. 45-46.

[20] *Chronik* I, p. 167.

[21] Letter, Brunner, St. Alphonse, O., Oct. 28, 1844, to Sisters, Loewenberg, *sha021.*

[22] Circular, Mother Mary Ann Albrecht; cf. N. 11 *supra.*

[23] Letter, Brunner, . . . June 17, 1845, to Loewenberg; extract in *Chronik* I, p. 171.

[24] *Ibid.,* p. 168.

[25] *Ibid.,* p. 169.

[26] *Priester und Brueder,* p. 96.

[27] *Chronik* I, p. 171; cf. *Notizen*, pp. 23-24.

[28] Letter, Brunner, St. Alphonse, O., June 17, 1845, to Sisters, Loewenberg; extract in *Chronik* I, p. 171.

[29] Letter, Brunner, St. Alphonse, O., Aug. 27, 1845, to Sisters, Loewenberg, *sha022*.

[30] Letter, Brunner, Wolfscreek, O., Mar. 28, 1846, to Sisters, Loewenberg, *sha023*.

[31] *Loc. cit.* in N. 29 *supra*.

[32] *Ibid.*

[33] *Chronik* I, pp. 171-172; cf. N. 30 *supra*.

CHAPTER II

Early background history of western Ohio is extensively treated in the first two volumes of Emilius O. Randall and Daniel J. Ryan, *History of Ohio: The Rise and Progress of an American State*, New York, 1912, 5 vols.; also in S. S. Scranton's *History of Mercer County and Representative Citizens*, Chicago, 1907, and in C. W. Williamson's *History of Western Ohio and Auglaize County*, Columbus, 1905. Henry Howe's *Historical Collections of Ohio*, Norwalk, 1896, 2 vols., is valuable for firsthand source material. The most intimate picture of community life in the early convents is found in the pamphlet by Father Brunner, *Die letzte Stunde eines Arbeiters im Weinberge des Herrn; eine Blume auf das Grab des hochw. Priesters P. Willibald Willi*, Einsiedeln, Switzerland, 1855 — a booklet that was largely drawn upon in the account of Mary's Home.

[1] Lamott, *History of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati*, pp. 154-155. The other four parishes were: St. Michael's, Fort Loramie, 1838; St. Rose's, St. Rose, Ohio (four miles west), 1839; St. Henry's, St. Henry, Ohio, 1839; St. Joseph's, Victoria, Ohio, 1839.

[2] Randall-Ryan, *History of Ohio*, II, 514-518; 547-558.

[3] Scranton, *History of Mercer County and Representative Citizens*, pp. 177-182.

[4] Lamott, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

[5] *Chronik* I, p. 174.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 175.

[7] Cf. I, 7, p. 92.

[8] *Chronik* I, p. 177; cf. *Notizen*, pp. 26-27.

[9] They were: Sister Magdalene Doerr, d. September 13, 1846; Postulant Mary Ann Obermueller, d. September 23, 1846; Sister M. Anna Schlupf, d. November 18, 1846.

[10] Letter, Brunner, Wolfscreek, O., Feb. 6, 1848, to Wittmer, Minster, O., *scac3*.

[11] The exact date is Oct. 17, 1847; for further details cf. *Chronik* I, p. 191.

[12] *Notizen*, pp. 28-30.

[13] *Chronik* I, p. 205.

[14] *Leben und Wirken*, p. 116.

[15] *Chronik* I, pp. 206-207.

[16] Brunner, *Christliche Lebensordnung gezogen aus den Schriften des ehrw. Priesters Joh. Baptist Bochele*, . . . n. d.

[17] *Chronik* I, pp. 207-208.

[18] Letter, Brunner, Wolfscreek, O., Oct. 3, 1848, to Matthias Kreusch, Minster, O., *scac8*.

[19] *Chronik* I, pp. 194-195.

[20] *Nuntius Aulae*, X:32, Jan. 1927; cf. Bishop Dwenger's eulogy at Father Kunkler's obsequies, III, 1, p. 258.

[21] *Chronik* I, pp. 210-212.

[22] Letter, Brunner, Maria Stein, O., Oct. 6, 1851, to Purcell, Cincinnati, O., *caa*.

[23] *Chronik* I, pp. 213-214, 231.

[24] Brunner, *Die letzte Stunde eines Arbeiters im Weinberge des Herrn, passim.*

[25] *Ibid.*, p. 13.

[26] *Ibid.*, pp. 15-17. The sermon was changed to direct discourse in the translation.

[27] *Ibid.*, p. 21.

[28] *Ibid.*, p. 23.

[29] *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24.

[30] *Ibid.*, pp. 25-28.

[31] *Ibid.*, p. 43.

[32] *Chronik* I, p. 231.

[33] *Ibid.*, pp. 237-240.

CHAPTER III

Wo sind sie? Die welche in die Kloester nach Amerika gewandert sind?, Freiburg, 1855: a pamphlet written by Father Brunner and distributed in Europe to give parents and prospective candidates an idea of the mode of life of members of the Congregation in America. The picture drawn is in some respects highly idealistic.

[1] Brunner, *Errinerungen und heilsame Raethe fuer die Ordnungsschwestern,* May 19, 1856, copy, *sha.*

[2] *Wo sind sie?*, p. 20. Father Brunner has the Theban Legion fighting under Maximilian instead of Maximian, evidently a slight confusion of names on his part; cf. *Cath. Encyc.*, I, "Agaunum," p. 205, and X, "Maximianus," pp. 74-75. He further identifies the Theban Legion with the Thundering Legion of Marcus Aurelius; cf. *Cath. Encyc.*, XIV, "Thundering Legion," p. 71.

[3] *Wo sind sie?*, pp. 20-23.

[4] Brunner, *Die Versammlung vom Kostbaren Blute,* Wolfscreek, Oct. 4, 1847, MS., *sha.*

[5] *Ibid.*; cf. *Notizen*, pp. 7-8.

[6] Letter, Brunner, Thompson, O., June 25, 1849, to Sister Kunigunda, Wolfscreek, O., *sha036.*

[7] *Wo sind sie?*, p. 26; cf. Brunner, *Pro nostra Congregatione in America,* Rome, Apr. 2, 1858, *scad59.*

[8] Letter, Brunner, St. Alphonse, O., July 22, 1844, to Butz, Loewenberg, in *Chronik* I, pp. 154-156.

[9] Letter, Brunner, St. Alphonse, O., July 22, 1844, to Sisters, Loewenberg, *sha033.*

[10] Letter, Brunner, Einsiedeln, Jan. 1, 1853, to Wittmer, Thompson, O., *scac35.*

[11] Letter, Brunner, Maria Stein, O., Feb. 20, 1854, to Sister Kunigunda, Minster, O., *sha068.* Sister Rosalia had died the preceding year, June 16, 1853, at the age of 38 years.

[12] Cf. N. 5 *supra.*

[13] *Jo.* IV, p. 43: Rome, Dec. 4, 1852.

[14] Both Rules by Father Brunner, orig. MSS., *sha.*

[15] *Ibid.*

[16] Cf. Letter of approbation, II, 4, p. 158.

[17] Letter, Brunner, Greenwood, O., Mar. 5, 1855, to Mother Kunigunda, Thompson, O., *sha073.*

[18] Brunner, *Correctionen* #5, *sha.*

[19] Sister Euphemia Goldschmid, Wolfscreek, O., 1854, orig. MS., *sha.*

[20] *Correctionen, sha.*

[21] Brunner, *Die Schwestern vom Kostbaren Blute,* p. 9, MS., *sha.*

[22] Father Amadeus Dambach, a secular priest who died at Glandorf, O., averred that he had been dismissed from the Congregation by Father Brunner on a false accusation of breaking silence. He had been ordained at New Riegel, Nov. 21, 1853, by Bishop Rappe. *Nuntius Aulae,* I:22, Jan. 1890.

[23] *Notizen,* p. 4.

[24] Brunner, *Regulations,* n. d., MS., *sha.*

[25] Letter, Brunner, St. Alphonse, O., June 25, 1846, to Sisters, Loewenberg, *sha024.*

[26] *Catholic Telegraph* XXIX, Sept. 22, 1860.

[27] *Die Schw. vom Kost. Blute,* p. 10.

[28] *Chronik* I, pp. 231-232.

[29] Letter, Brunner, Wolfscreek, O., Feb. 24, 1848, to Wittmer, Minster, O., *scac3.*

[30] Letter, Brunner, Wolfscreek, O., Apr. 13, 1848, to Wittmer, Minster, O. *scac4.*

[31] Letter, Brunner, Wolfscreek, O., Aug. 10, 1848, to Wittmer, Thompson, O., *scac7;* cf. Letter, Brunner, Maria Stein, O., Oct. 6, 1851, to Purcell, Cincinnati, O.: *"Tres sorores ex nostris sunt nunc in Dayton, ut ibidem instruantur," caa.*

[32] Letter, Brunner, . . . Aug. 28, 1851, to Wittmer, Thompson, O., *scac27.*

[33] Brunner, "Explanation of the Spirit of Our Congregation," *Book of Customs,* p. 160.

[34] *Die Schw. vom Kost. Blute,* p. 10.

[35] Brunner, Letters, *sha026, 026a, 051, 054, 064, 049, 051, 070, 067, 090, 074.*

[36] Letter, Brunner, . . . n. d., to Sister M. Agatha, Minster, O., *sha075.*

[37] Letter, Brunner, Maria Stein, O., May 20, 1855, to Sister M. Euphemia, Wolfscreek, O., *sha074;* cf. Letter, Brunner, Minster, O., Oct. 3, 1853, to the Fathers, C. PP. S., *067.*

CHAPTER IV

As on his first voyage to America, Father Brunner kept a diary on each of his trips abroad; they are designated in the notes as follows: *Jo.* II (1849-50), *Jo.* III (1852-53), *Jo.* IV (1855-56), orig. MSS., *sha.*

[1] Letter, Brunner, Wolfscreek, O., Aug. 21, 1848, to Wittmer, Maria Stein, O., *scac8;* cf. *Jo.* II, pp. 1-2.

[2] Joseph Albrecht, Sebastian Ganther, Augustine Berger. Cf. *Wo sind sie?,* "Namensverzeichniss der Priester im Jahre 1855."

[3] *Jo.* II, p. 2.

[4] *Ibid.,* p. 4.

[5] *Ibid.,* p. 16.

[6] *Ibid.,* p. 18.

[7] *Ibid.,* p. 40.

[8] *Ibid.,* pp. 41, 47.

[9] *Cath. Encyc.,* XIV, "Switzerland," p. 358 ff.

[10] Letter, Brunner, Loewenberg, Nov. 1, 1849, to John Wittmer, Thompson, O., for community, *scac13.*

[11] *Ibid.*

[12] *Jo.* II, pp. 50-59.

[13] Letter, Caspar von Carl, Chur, Jan. 2, 1850, to Brunner, Loewenberg, orig. Latin text, *sha.*

[14] *Chronik* I, p. 204.

[15] *Catholic Telegraph,* XVI, Oct. 2, 1845.

[16] *Jo.* II, pp. 61-65.

[17] *Ibid.,* p. 66.

[18] Letter, Brunner, Baden, May 20, 1850, to Johann Jaeggi, Muemliswil, *scac18.*

[19] Letter, Merlini, Rome, May 9, 1850, to Brunner, Loewenberg, German trans. of orig., *sca.*

[20] Letter, Brunner, Loewenberg, May 29, 1850, to Merlini, Rome, *scac1.*

[21] Letter, Brunner, S. Bernardini, Rhaetia, July 2, 1850, to Merlini, Rome, *scac1.*

[22] *Jo.* II, p. 67.

[23] Letter, Brunner, S. Bernardini, Rhaetia, July 2, 1850, to Merlini, Rome, *scac1.*

[24] *Jo.* II, p. 69.

[25] *Jo.* III, pp. 2-15.

[26] Letter, Brunner, New Riegel, O., May 1, 1852, to Rappe, Cleveland, O., *scac1.*

[27] Letter, Anton Meier, Greenwood, O., July 20, 1857, to Purcell, Cincinnati, O., *caa.*

[28] Letter, Rappe, Cleveland, O., . . . 1852, to Brunner, *scac1.*

[29] Letter, Brunner, en route to Havre, June 30, 1852, to Sisters, Thompson, O., in *Chronik* I, p. 218.

[30] *Jo.* III, p. 99.

[31] Brother Francis Xavier, Sister M. Agatha, and Sister M. Philothea.

[32] *Jo.* III, pp. 1-2.

[33] Letter, Brunner, S. Bernardini, Aug. 14, 1852, to Merlini, Rome, *scac1.*

[34] *Jo.* III, p. 110; cf. Letter, Brunner, Chur, Sept. 1, 1852, to Brothers and Sisters, Glandorf, *scac1.*

[35] *Ibid.*, pp. 107-111 and letter *ut supra.*

[36] This priest, one of the first disciples of Father Brunner at Loewenberg, was ordained for the Precious Blood missions, November, 1840. After Father Brunner's departure for America, he left the Congregation, in 1844, and was received into the diocese of Basle.

[37] Letter, Brunner, Rome, Nov. 25, 1852, to Wittmer, Thompson, O., *scac33.*

[38] *Jo.* IV, p. 36.

[39] *Ibid.*, p. 44. (Cf. Letter, Brunner, Einsiedeln, Jan. 1, 1853, to Wittmer, Thompson, O., *scac35.*)

[40] *Ibid.*

[41] *Ibid.*, p. 48.

[42] Letter, Brunner, Einsiedeln, Jan. 1, 1853, to Wittmer, Thompson, O., *scac35.*

[43] Letter, Brunner, Freiburg, Baden, Mar. 23, 1853, to Mother Johanna Gruenfelder, Maria Stein, O., *sha065.*

[44] Letters, Brunner, Freiburg, Mar. 26 and Apr. 12, 1853, to Johann Jaeggi, Muemliswil, *scac35.*

[45] Letter, Brunner, Freiburg, Feb. 4, 1853, to Sisters in America, *sha064.*

[46] Brunner, *Namensverzeichniss der Schwestern vom Kostbaren Blute,* Freiburg, 1855; cf. *Wo sind sie?*, p. 52. Cf. numbers given here with those for 1847 — 8 priests, 12 Brothers, 29 Sisters — in the MS., *Die Versammlung vom Kostbaren Blute, sha.*

[47] Letter, Brunner, Cleveland, O., June 12, 1855, to Wittmer, Mary's Home, Ind., *scad20.*

[48] Letters, Brunner, Freiburg, Nov. 8 and Nov. 24, and Maria Stein, Switz., Dec. 9, 1855, to Wittmer, *scad21.*

[49] Quoted in letter, Brunner, Freiburg, Dec. 28, 1855, to Wittmer, *scad21.* It is not certain whether the reference in the letter is to the John Probst formerly at Loewenberg, who came to Cincinnati and taught at St. Xavier's. The letter Father Brunner quotes was written by John Probst, Cleveland, Ohio.

[50] *Ibid.*

[51] Letter, Brunner, Maria Stein, Switz., Apr. 7, 1856, to Wittmer, *scad23.*

[52] *Ibid.*; also May 3, 1856, *scad23.*

[53] Letter, Brunner, Maria Stein, Mar. 18, 1856, to Wittmer, *scad22.*

[54] Letters, Brunner, Freiburg, Dec. 28, 1855, and Maria Stein, Feb. 2, 1856, to Wittmer, *scad22.*

[55] Letter, Brunner, Maria Stein, Feb. 19, 1856, to Wittmer, *scad22.*

[56] Letter, Brunner, Terasp, July 25, 1856, to Wittmer, *scad25.*

[57] Letter, Brunner, Havre, Sept. 17, 1856, to Wittmer, *scad25.*

[58] Letter, Brunner, Maria Stein, Mar. 24, 1856, to Wittmer, *scad22.*

CHAPTER V

John B. Buechel's *Geschichte des Gebietes des heutigen Fuerstentums Liechtenstein,* Einsiedeln, 1894, gives the historical background of the Schellenberg. Owen Williams Maynard in his travel article, "Round about Liechtenstein," *National Geographic Magazine,* LII:611-634, Nov. 1927, presents a graphic description of the principality and its environs. For the foundation and subsequent history of the convent, a manuscript copy of the *Chronik der Schwestern-Versammlung vom Kostbaren Blute in Schellenberg* was used.

[1] Letter, Brunner, Obladis, Tyrol, Sept. 5, 1857, to Sister Kunigunda, Minster, O., *sha099.*

[2] Letter, Brunner, Havre, July 24, 1857, to Merlini, Rome, *scac1.*

[3] Brunner, *Notizen fuer Seelsorger,* 1857, *scad28.*

[4] Letter, Brunner, Havre, July 24, 1857, to Merlini, Rome, *scac1.*

[5] Circular Letter, Brunner, Thompson, O., June 20, 1857, to Sisters in America, *sha095.*

[6] Letter, Brunner, Obladis, Aug. 20, 1857, to Wittmer, Thompson, O., *scad26.*

[7] Letter, M. Anton Meier, Greenwood, O., July 15, 1857, to Purcell, Cincinnati, O., *caa.*

[8] Letter, Brunner, Obladis, Aug. 27, 1857, to Wittmer, Thompson, O., *scad26.*

[9] *Ibid.*

[10] Letter, Brunner, Obladis, Oct. 13, 1857, to Wittmer, Thompson, O., *scad27.*

[11] Letter, Homburger, Kronburg, Ober Tyrol, Oct. 28, 1857, to Kunkler, Minster, O., *scad27.*

[12] Letter, Brunner, Kronburg, Oct. 15, 1857, to Sister Kunigunda, Minster, O., *sha101.*

[13] Letter, Brunner, Kronburg, Oct. 13, 1857, to Wittmer, Thompson, O., *scad27.*

[14] Letter, Brunner, Kronburg, Oct. 15, 1857, to Sister Kunigunda, Minster, O., *sha101.*

[15] Letter (signed), Brunner, dictated to Homburger, Kronburg, Nov. 14, 1857, to Wittmer, Thompson, O., *scad27.*

[16] Letter, Brunner, Kronburg, Jan. 20, 1858, to Wittmer, *scad28.*

[17] Letter, Brunner, Kronburg, Feb. 10, 1858, to Wittmer, *scad28.*

[18] Letter, Homburger, Loreto, Mar. 23, 1858, to Wittmer, *scad29.*

[19] Letter, Brunner, Rome, Apr. 4, 1858, to Wittmer, *scad30.*

[20] Letter, Brunner, Rome, May 10, 1858, to Wittmer, *scad31.*

[21] Notice, Brunner, Rome, *Die Parasceves,* Apr. 2, 1858, *Pro nostra Congregatione in America, scad29.*

[22] Letter, Brunner, Rome, Apr. 4, 1858, to Wittmer, *scad30.*

[23] Letter, Brunner, Rome, Apr. 10, 1858, to Wittmer, *scad30.*

[24] Letter, Brunner, Feldkirch, Austria, June 21, 1858, to Mother Kunigunda, Minster, O., *sha104.*

[25] Maynard, "Round about Liechtenstein," *National Geographic Magazine,* LII:611-634, Nov. 1927.

[26] Buechel, *Geschichte des Gebietes des heutigen Fuerstentums Liechtenstein,* pp. 7-11.

[27] *Ibid.*, p. 42.

[28] *Ibid.*, p. 44.

[29] *Ibid.*, p. 52.

[30] Letter, Brunner, Feldkirch, June 22, 1858, to Romani, Rome, *scad31;* also Letter, Brunner, Feldkirch, June 21, 1858, to Mother Kunigunda, Minster, O., *sha104.*

[31] Letter, Brunner, Feldkirch, July 28, 1858, to Ruf, America [*sic*], *sha105.*

[32] Letter, Brunner, Schellenberg, July 29, 1858, to Austermann, Greenwood, O., *scad31.*

[33] *Chronik der Schw. Versammlung vom Kostbaren Blute in Schellenberg,* pp. 12-14, MS. copy in *sha;* cf. Letter, Brunner, Feldkirch, Oct. 15, 1858, to Schelbert, Glandorf, O., *sha114,* and June 9, 1859, to Wittmer, Thompson, O., *scad35.*

[34] *Chronik der Schw. Versammlung vom Kostbaren Blute in Schellenberg,* pp. 14, 19.

[35] This may also mean a man by the name of Richter. The original reads: " . . . denn der Richter hat . . . gekauft." Letter, Brunner, Feldkirch, Oct. 4, 1858, to Mother Kunigunda, Maria Stein, O., *sha107.*

[36] *Ibid.*

[37] Letter, Brunner, Feldkirch, sometime between Oct. 4 and 12 (day of month is illegible), 1858, to Mother Kunigunda, Maria Stein, O., *sha108.*

[38] Letter, Brunner, Feldkirch, Oct. 15, 1858, to Schelbert, Glandorf, O., *sha114.*

[39] Cf. N. 23 *supra.*

[40] Letter, Brunner, Feldkirch, Jan. 14, 1859, to Wittmer, *sha117.*

[41] *Chronik der Schw. Versammlung vom Kostbaren Blute in Schellenberg,* pp. 13-14.

[42] Cf. N. 37 *supra.*

[43] Letter, Brunner, Feldkirch, Feb. 3, 1859, to Wittmer, *scad33.*

[44] Letter, Brunner, Feldkirch, June 9, 1859, to Wittmer, *scad35.*

[45] Letter, Brunner, Feldkirch, Aug. 29, 1859, to Wittmer, *scad35.*

CHAPTER VI

[1] Letter (signed), Brunner, Feldkirch, Aug. 31, 1859, to Wittmer, *scad35.*

[2] Circular Letter, Brunner, Feldkirch, Nov. 21, 1859, to community in America, *scad37.*

[3] Letter, Brunner, Feldkirch, Nov. 14, 1859, to Wittmer, *scad36.*

[4] Letter, Brunner, Feldkirch, Aug. 29, 1859, to Wittmer, *scad35.*

[5] Letter, Brunner, Feldkirch, Nov. 21, 1859, to Sisters in America, *sha031.*

[6] *Chronik* I, p. 259.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 260.

[8] *Herold des Kostbaren Blutes,* VII:287-88, Dec. 1931.

[9] Letter, Brunner, Feldkirch, Dec. 27, 1859, to Mother Kunigunda for Congregation in America, *sha131.*

[10] Letter, Mother Johanna, Feldkirch, Jan. . . , 1860, to Sisters in America, *sha032.*

[11] *Leben und Wirken,* p. 104.

[12] Martyrology and Death Register, Fathers of the Precious Blood, Carthagena, O.

[13] *Herald of the Precious Blood:* the title of the English version of the life of Bl. Gaspar del Bufalo noted in I, 4.

[14] Letter, Brunner, Freiburg, Mar. 23, 1853, to Mother Johanna, Maria Stein, O., *sha065.*

[15] Quoted verbally by Sister M. Victoria Drees, assistant to the treasurer general, Salem Heights.

[16] Salutation of letter reads: "My beloved Sisters, Lambs and Brides of Jesus Christ"; copy in *Leben und Wirken,* p. 199.

Chapter VII

The chief source for the account of the secession of Father Joseph Albrecht and his faction from the Congregation and for their subsequent history in the West is an article by Reverend F. G. Holweck in the *Pastoral-Blatt,* March, 1920. This article is based for the most part on an account written by Reverend F. X. Weniger, S. J., Dec. 2, 1871, and printed in the *Wanderer,* St. Paul, Minn., in the issues for Dec. 3 and 9, 1871, and Jan. 6, 1872. Among other sources used by Father Holweck was an article that appeared in the *Katholische Hausfreund,* O'Fallon, Mo., 1888, and another in the *St. Paul Pioneer Press,* Nov. 20, 1892. The facts of the case are further substantiated by letters from Father Kunkler to Archbishop Purcell and by a letter of apology from Father Albrecht himself to the archbishop — documents which are preserved in the archdiocesan archives.

[1] *Nuntius Aulae,* I:25, Jan. 1890.

[2] Cf. Bishop Dwenger's funeral oration, III, 1, p. 257 ff.

[3] Martyrology and Death Register, Fathers of the Precious Blood, Carthagena, O.

[4] *Nuntius Aulae,* X:177 ff., July 1927.

[5] Letter, Kunkler, Minster, O., Dec. 28, 1860, to Sisters, Thompson, O., *sha140.*

[6] Letter, Kunkler, Minster, O., Dec. . . , 1860, to Purcell, Cincinnati, O., *caa.*

[7] "Der hochw. Andreas Kunkler," *Zur hundertjaehrigen Gedaechtnisfeier der Gruendung der Genossenshaft der Missionspriester vom Kostbaren Blute, 1815-1915,* p. 104.

[8] *Catholic Telegraph,* XXX, Feb. 16, 1861.

[9] *Chronik* I, p. 266.

[10] *Ibid.,* pp. 266-274.

[11] Holweck, "Reverend Joseph Albrecht," *Pastoral-Blatt,* Mar. 1920, pp. 33-40.

[12] Letter (signed), Brunner, dictated to Homburger, Kronburg, Nov. 14, 1857, to Wittmer, *scad27.*

[13] Letter, Brunner, Maria Stein, Switz., Feb. 19, 1856, to Wittmer, *scad22.*

[14] Letter, Brunner, Feldkirch, Feb. 3, 1859, to Wittmer, *scad33.* The "Fr. Oswald" mentioned in this letter may be Rev. Ambrose Oschwald of Eaton, Wis. Cf. Letter, Kunkler, in N. 17 *infra.*

[15] Holweck, *loc. cit.;* cf. Letter, Kunkler, Minster, O., July 3, 1866, to Purcell, Cincinnati, O., *caa.*

[16] Letter, Albrecht, . . . Sept. 28, 1866, to Purcell, Cincinnati, O., *caa.*

[17] Holweck, *loc. cit.;* cf. also Letter, Kunkler, Minster, O., Dec. 19, 1866, to Purcell, Cincinnati, O., *caa.*

[18] Letter, Kunkler, Minster, O., Dec. 28, 1866, to Purcell, Cincinnati, O., *caa.*

[19] Holweck, *loc. cit.*

[20] *Ibid.* The bull of excommunication is dated Nov. 23, 1871.

[21] *Daily Journal,* Fergus Falls, Minn., Oct. 9, 1885.

[22] Holweck, *loc. cit.*

[23] *Nuntius Aulae,* XVII:176 ff., July 1934; cf. Henneberry Papers, *sca.*

[24] Letter, Drees, Minster, O., Jan. 28, 1875, to Purcell, Cincinnati, O., *caa.*

[25] *Nuntius Aulae,* XVII:179-180, July 1934.

[26] F. X. Griessmeier, "Vom gelobten Lande": A Report from Lawrenceburg, Tenn., July 30, 1894, in *Nuntius Aulae,* V:117-118, Oct. 1894.

[27] Qtd. by Griessmeier, *loc. cit.*

[28] *Ibid.*, pp. 117-119.

[29] Joseph H. Busse, "Reminiscences of Tennessee," *Nuntius Aulae,* II:142-144. July 1919.

[30] *Ibid.*, pp. 144-145.

[31] *Ibid.*, pp. 146-148.

[32] *Ibid.*

[33] Letter, Byrne, Nashville, Tenn., June 6, 1902, to Mother Emma, Maria Stein, O., *sha285.*

[34] Busse, "Reminiscences of Tennessee," *loc. cit.*

[35] Brunner, *Die Schw. vom Kost. Blute,* p. 20.

[36] *Chronik* I, p. 273.

[37] *Nuntius Aulae,* VIII:5, Jan. 1925.

[38] *Nuntius Aulae,* X:177, July 1927.

[39] *Ibid.*, p. 184.

CHAPTER VIII

The story of the collecting and enshrining of the relics is given fully in Father J. M. Gartner's account, posthumously published, *Die Wallfahrts-Kirche zu Maria Stein,* Carthagena, 1898. *The Pilgrim's Guide Book for Maria Stein with Exposition and Explanation of Its Rare Treasures,* Minster, 1917, written in English by Peregrinus (a priest who resided at Maria Stein for some months, but who wished his name withheld), is largely based on the foregoing work. It serves, as the title indicates, as a manual for visitors to the chapel.

[1] Cf. III, 8, p. 376.

[2] Gartner, *Die Wallfahrts-Kirche zu Maria Stein,* p. 27.

[3] Cf. II, 1. p. 119.

[4] Gartner, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 4.

[6] *Ibid.*

[7] *Ibid.*

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 5.

[9] Peregrinus, *Pilgrims' Guide Book for Maria Stein,* pp. 16, 28-29.

[10] *Chronik* I, p. 281.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 282.

[12] *Ibid.*, pp. 282-283.

[13] Sister M. Clementine Enneking, custodian of the relics for many years, MS., *sha.*

[14] Letter, Austermann, Maria Stein, O., Mar. 24, 1876, to Purcell, Cincinnati, O., *caa.*

[15] *Chronik* I, pp. 283-284.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 284.

[17] Letter, Gartner, Hokan, Wis., Jan. 4, 1877, to Austermann and Sisters, Maria Stein, O., *sha165.*

[18] Sister Clementine, *loc. cit.*

[19] Letter, Austermann, St. Paul's, Cincinnati, O., Aug. 23, 1887, to Eisenring, Maria Stein, O., *sha170.*

[20] Letter, Austermann, Loretto, Tenn., Apr. 19, 1890, to Drees, Carthagena, O., *sha171.*

[21] *Chronik* II, p. 16.

[22] For a fuller description of the chapel and a complete index of the relics, cf. Peregrinus, *op. cit.*, Chaps. V and VI.

[23] *Ibid.*, pp. 54-55.

CHAPTER IX

Besides the archival sources, which were freely drawn upon in gathering material for this chapter, the main authorities used were: *The Catholic Church in the United States of America: The Religious Communities of Women,* 3 vols., New York, 1913, published by the Catholic Editing Co.; and Elinor T. Dehey (comp.), *Religious Orders of Women in the United States: Accounts of Their Origin and of Their Most Important Institutions,* New York, 1930, published by W. B. Conkey. Both give the background history of the *Sisters Adorers of the Most Precious Blood,* who have their central house in Rome, Italy.

[1] Martyrology and Death Register, Fathers of the Precious Blood, Carthagena, O.

[2] *Messenger of the Precious Blood,* XXI:335, Aug. 1915.

[3] Letter, Mother Karolina Signoretti, Rome, Nov. 27, 1878, to all Sisters of the Precious Blood both in and outside of Italy, *sha178.*

[4] *Chronik* I, p. 305.

[5] Letter, Mother Karolina Signoretti, Rome, Mar. 14, 1880, to Mother Kunigunda, Maria Stein, O., *sha179.*

[6] Circular Letter, Mother Karolina Signoretti, Rome, Nov. 12, 1880, to all the Sisters of the Precious Blood, *sha180.*

[7] Letter, Mother Karolina Signoretti, Nov. 12, 1880, to Mother Kunigunda and Sisters, Maria Stein, O., *sha181.*

[8] *Chronik* I, p. 305.

[9] *The Catholic Church in the United States of America: Religious Communities of Women,* II, 7.

[10] Letter, Elder, Cincinnati, O., Dec. 2, 1887, to Mother Ludovica, Maria Stein, O., *sha213.*

[11] Letter, Elder, Cincinnati, O., Dec. 8, 1887, to Mother Cunegunda, Maria Stein, O., *sha214.* Archbishop Elder invariably spelled her name *Cunegunda.*

[12] Letter, Sisters of the Precious Blood, Maria Stein, O., Jan. . . , 1888, to Pope Leo XIII, Rome, copy, *sha182.*

[13] Drees, *Einige Worte an alle Schwestern der Versammlung vom Kostbaren Blute,* Carthagena, 1882.

[14] Drees, *Einige Worte an alle Ordnungschwestern der Versammlung vom Kostbaren Blute,* Carthagena, 1882.

[15] Letter, Drees, Fort Wayne, Ind., Apr. 23, 1883, to Sister Ludovica and Sisters, Glandorf, O., *sha150.*

[16] Parish schools were opened at Ottawa and Fort Recovery, O., 1881; Reed, O., and Sedalia, Mo., 1882; Beloit, Kans., 1886; Russia, Botkins, Freyburg, and Troy, O., and Mount Rose, Mo., 1887.

[17] *Back Woods,* IV, Dec. 1890.

[18] Cf. Circular, Drees, Carthagena, O., Jan. . . , 1889, to the Brothers and Sisters, *sha151.*

[19] *Chronik,* I, pp. 301-2.

[20] Letter, Drees, Carthagena, O., Nov. 11, 1886, to Sisters, Maria Stein, O., *sha152;* this letter shows that the decision of the committees regarding the amount of property to be given over had been submitted to the Sisters some months before.

[21] Act of Separation, copy, *sha.*

[22] Copies of records, *sha.*

[23] Circular Letter, Elder, Cincinnati, O., June 14, 1887, to Sisters of the Precious Blood, *sha206.*

[24] Letter, Elder, Cincinnati, O., Dec. 13, 1887, to Mother Cunegunda, Maria Stein, O., *sha215.*

[25] Letter, Drees, Carthagena, O., Nov. 11, 1886, to Sisters of the Precious Blood, *sha153.*

PART THREE

(pages 237-386)

CHAPTER I

[1] Letter, Elder, Cincinnati, O., Aug. 20, 1886, to Mother Cunegunda, Maria Stein, O., *sha203.*

[2] Letter, Elder, Cincinnati, O., Mar. 6, 1887, to Mother Cunegunda, Maria Stein, O., *sha205.*

[3] Letter, Elder, Cincinnati, O., June 25, 1887, to Sister Ludovica, Maria Stein, O., *sha208.*

[4] *Sha207.*

[5] *Chronik* I, pp. 308-11.

[6] *Sha209.*

[7] Letter, Elder, Cincinnati, O., Apr. 13, 1888, to Mother Ludovica, Maria Stein, O., *sha216a.*

[8] Approved copy, *sha.*

[9] Letter, Elder, Cincinnati, O., July 22, 1888, to Sister Cecilia, Greenwood, O., *sha218a.*

[10] Letter, Elder, Cincinnati, O., Oct. 10, 1888, to Sister Cecilia, Greenwood, O., *sha223.*

[11] Letter, Elder, Cincinnati, O., Sept. 3, 1889, to Mother Ludovica, Maria Stein, O., *sha228.*

[12] Approved Rule, copy, *sha.*

[13] Sister Ludovica's act of profession, orig. MS., *sha195.*

[14] *Record of the Sisters of the Precious Blood,* p. 8.

[15] *Chronik* I, p. 311.

[16] Letter, Elder, Cincinnati, O., Aug. 21, 1888, to Sister Cecilia, Greenwood, O., *sha221.*

[17] *Ritual of the Sisters of the Precious Blood,* approved by Wm. H. Elder, Oct. 7, 1888.

[18] Letter, Elder, Cincinnati, O., Aug. 21, 1888, to Sister Cecilia, Greenwood, O., authorizing Father Drees to make canonical examination, *sha221.*

[19] *Chronik* I, p. 316.

[20] Letter, Elder, Cincinnati, O., July 15, 1888, to Mother Ludovica, Maria Stein, O., *sha218.*

[21] Circular, copy in *Chronik* I, pp. 315-316.

[22] This crucifix is now on the high altar of the Relic Chapel at Maria Stein, O.

[23] *Sha220.*

[24] Letter, Elder, Cincinnati, O., Aug. 21, 1888, to Sister Cecilia, Greenwood, O., *sha221.*

[25] The School Sisters of the Precious Blood, Art. 8, MS., *sha218a.* Approved by Archbishop Elder, July 22, 1888.

[26] Letter, Schlachter, Plymouth, Ind., July 8, 1889, to Sister Cecilia, Greenwood, O., *sha183.*

[27] Others who commented favorably were: Charles L. Loos, Dayton High School, *sha184;* C. W. Williamson, Superintendent of Wapakoneta Union School, *sha185;* Rev. F. M. Quatman, pastor of Holy Angels, Sidney, O., *sha186.*

[28] Letter, Hancock, Wapakoneta, O., Aug. 16, 1889, to Sisters of the Precious Blood, Maria Stein, O., *sha187.*

[29] *Chronik* I, p. 316; II, pp. 12-13, 25.

[30] *Chronik* II, p. 25.

[31] *Catholic Telegraph,* LXXVIII, June 10, 1909.

[32] Letter, Kunkler, Sedalia, Mo., Nov. 19, 1885, to Sisters of the Precious Blood, Minster, O., copy in *Chronik* II, pp. 10-12.

[33] *Ibid.*

[34] Translation from the German of the funeral oration delivered by Bishop Dwenger; German orig. in *Chronik* II, pp. 4-9.

[35] *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

[36] Letter, Elder, Cincinnati, O., Jan. 15, 1891, to Mother Cunegunda, Maria Stein, O., *sha234*.

[37] *Chronik* II, pp. 28-29; also Circular Letter, Mother Ludovica, Maria Stein, O., July 15, 1891, to Sisters of the Precious Blood, *sha189*.

[38] *Chronik* II, p. 29.

[39] *Ibid.*, pp. 29-32.

[40] *Ibid.*

CHAPTER II

[1] *Chronik* I, p. 313.

[2] Report by Rev. J. C. Albrinck and Rev. John M. Mackey, approved by Most Rev. Wm. H. Elder, Jan. 2, 1889, *sha188*.

[3] *Chronik* II, pp. 13-15; cf. *Catholic Telegraph,* LIX, July 26, 1890, which gives date of ceremony as June 10.

[4] *Chronik* II, p. 34.

[5] Cf. II, 8, p. 222f.

[6] *Chronicle of the Normal School,* p. 8.

[7] *Record of Sisters of the Precious Blood,* p. 199.

[8] *Chronicle of the Normal School,* p. 8. This mentions only two schools, viz. at St. Wendelin and Fulton, but *Chronik* II, p. 33, gives four.

[9] Letter, Elder, Cincinnati, O., Feb. 19, 1892, to Mother Ludovica, Maria Stein, O., *sha239a*.

[10] Letter, Elder, Cincinnati, O., July 25, 1892, to Mother Ludovica, Maria Stein, O., *sha249*.

[11] *Chronik* II, p. 37.

[12] Letter, Elder, Cincinnati, O., Sept. 25, 1894, to Mother Ludovica, Maria Stein, O., *sha253*.

[13] *Chronik* II, pp. 35, 46, 48-51.

[14] *Rule of the Sisters of the Precious Blood,* approved 1889, Ch. I, Art. 1.

[15] Schools taken over in Mother Ludovica's second term (1893-1899) were: St. Francis', Cranberry Prairie, and St. Mary's, Casella, O., both district schools, 1895; Monroeville, O., and La Porte, Ind., 1896; St. Wendelin's, resumed 1897; and Precious Blood, Fort Wayne, Ind., 1898.

[16] In 1889 sixteen Sisters entered, eleven died; in 1890 twenty-four entered, twenty-one died.

[17] In 1891, twenty-six entered (seven from Europe), thirteen died.

[18] *Chronik* II, pp. 32-33.

[19] *Chronik der Schw. Versammlung vom Kostbaren Blute in Schellenberg,* pp. 43-52.

[20] *Chronik* II, p. 33.

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 39. The other officers were also re-elected, except Sister Edmunda Schemmel, whose place as procuratrix was taken by Sister Mansuetta Graf.

[22] Letter, Battagli, Chur, Switz., Dec. 14, 1893, to Mother Ludovica, Maria Stein, O., *sha286*.

[23] *Chronik* II, p. 40.

[24] *Ibid.*, p. 42.

[25] Letter, Mother Ludovica, Maria Stein, O., sometime between June and Nov. 1895, to Battagli, Chur, Switz., copy, *sha*.

[26] *Chronik der Schw. Versammlung vom Kostbaren Blute in Schellenberg,* p. 55.

[27] Letter, Elder, Cincinnati, O., May 22, 1896, to Mother Ludovica, Maria Stein, O., *sha258*.

[28] Letter, Elder, Cincinnati, O., June 3, 1896, to Sister Cecilia, Maria Stein, O., *sha259*.

[29] Letter, Hahn, Banning, Cal., Nov. 21, 1890, to *Nuntius Aulae*, II:38, Feb. 1891.

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 43.

[31] *Chronik* II, p. 44.

[32] Letter, Elder, Cincinnati, O., Mar. 29, 1898, to Mother Ludovica, Maria Stein, O., *sha263a*.

[33] Letter, Elder, Cincinnati, O., Apr. 5, 1898, to Mother Ludovica, Maria Stein, O., *sha264*.

[34] Letter, Elder, Cincinnati, O., Apr. 27, 1898, to Mother Ludovica, Maria Stein, O., *sha265*.

[35] *Chronik* II, p. 51. The number of candidates given here is fifteen, but a living member of the class maintains there were only twelve besides the two children, who entered later.

[36] Letter, Elder, Cincinnati, O., June 17, 1899, to Mother Ludovica, Maria Stein, O., *sha270*.

[37] *Chronik* II, pp. 52-53.

CHAPTER III

The *Chronicle of the Kneipp Sanitarium, Rome City, Indiana* (1901-1944), a typewritten record of events which has been kept up uninterruptedly since the foundation, and *The Kneipp Sanitarium*, a printed brochure, are the chief sources for the history of that institution.

[1] Most Rev. Archbishop J. T. McNicholas in his sermon at her obsequies, *Catholic Telegraph-Register*, CV, Nov. 7, 1935.

[2] *Record of Sisters of the Precious Blood*, p. 9.

[3] Letter, Freriks, Kenosha, Wis., Nov. 1, 1935, to Mother Agreda, Dayton, O., *sha472*.

[4] *Chronik* II, p. 54.

[5] Cf. *Rule of the Sisters of the Precious Blood*, Ch. IV, Arts. 1-2; Ch. VII, Art. 1.

[6] *Chronik* II, p. 66.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 65.

[8] *Cath. Encyc.*, VIII, "Sebastian Kneipp," pp. 669-70.

[9] *Chronik* II, p. 42.

[10] Letter, Elder, Cincinnati, O., Sept. 13, 1901, to Mother Emma, Maria Stein, O., *sha275*.

[11] Letter, Sisters, Maria Stein, O., Dec. 7, 1901, to Elder, Cincinnati, O., copy, *sha*.

[12] *Chronicle of the Kneipp Sanitarium*, I, 1.

[13] Letter, Elder, Cincinnati, O., Feb. 19, 1902, to Mother Emma, Maria Stein, O., *sha276*.

[14] *Chronicle of the Kneipp Sanitarium*, I, 1-5.

[15] *Chronik* II, p. 68.

[16] *Chronicle of the Kneipp Sanitarium*, I, 95.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 4.

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 6.

[20] Dedicated Aug. 19, 1905; *ibid.*, p. 12.

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 43.

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 42.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 50.

[24] *Ibid.*, p. 87.

[25] *Ibid.*, p. 121.

[26] *Ibid.*, p. 8 *et passim*.

[27] *Ibid.*, p. 18.

[28] *Ibid.*, p. 25.

[29] *Ibid.*, p. 30.

[30] McAllister, "House of Good Bread and of Rest," in *Kneipp Sanitarium*, p. 23.

[31] *Chronik* II, pp. 72-73.

[32] *The Sisters of the Precious Blood Go West*, p. 2, MS., *sha576.*

[33] *Ibid.*

[34] *Ibid.*

[35] *Chronik* II, pp. 53-76.

[36] *Ibid.*, pp. 55-63.

[37] *Ibid.*, pp. 74-75.

[38] Mother Emma, *Rom-Reise,* 1904, p. 2, MS., *sha350.*

[39] *Ibid.*, pp. 2-8.

[40] *Ibid.*, pp. 9-11.

[41] *Ibid.*, pp. 11-13.

[42] *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

[43] *Ibid.*, p. 15.

[44] *Ibid.*, p. 23.

[45] *Chronik* II, p. 78.

[46] Letter, Elder, Cincinnati, O., Jan. 26, 1904, to Mother Emma and community, *sha281.*

[47] *Chronik* II, p. 80.

[48] *Ibid.*, pp. 82-83.

Chapter IV

The *History of the Normal School,* in manuscript form, is a brief work, recently compiled from various original sources as well as from tradition. The account of the early days of the school is very sketchy.

[1] Raoul Plus, S. J.,*Meditations for Religious.* p. 234.

[2] *Chronik* II, pp. 82-83.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 84-86.

[4] Letter, Mother Josephine, Maria Stein, O., Dec. 28, 1908, to Sisters of the Precious Blood, in *Chronik* II, pp. 105-106.

[5] She was nineteenth in order of the Sisters of the Precious Blood who taught school in America.

[6] *Chronik* II, p. 89.

[7] *Catholic Telegraph,* LXXV, Nov. 1, 1906.

[8] *Chronik* II, p. 102.

[9] *Catholic Telegraph,* LXXVIII, June 24, 1909.

[10] Sister Victoria's own account, *Chronik* II, p. 104.

[11] *Ibid.*, pp. 108-109.

[12] *Ibid.*, pp. 104-105.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 83.

[14] *Expansion,* p. 2, MS., *sha577.*

[15] Letter, Mother Emma, Phoenix, Ariz., Nov. 19, 1908, to Sister Clementine, Maria Stein, O., *sha351.*

[16] *The Sisters of the Precious Blood Go West,* p. 5, MS., *sha576.*

[17] Letter, Mother Emma, Phoenix, Ariz., Jan. 17, 1909, to Sister Clementine, Maria Stein, O., *sha352.*

[18] In 1906 Sister Anselma Rufle and Sister Felicitas Schlachter went abroad, bringing back more than 20 candidates, 19 of whom were professed; cf. *Chronik* II, pp. 87-88. In 1908 Sisters Margaret, Anselma, and Regula brought 21 candidates; *ibid.*, p. 103.

[19] *History of the Normal School,* pp. 18-23.

[20] *Ibid.*, pp. 14, 19.

[21] *Summer School,* 1893-1922, I, 1-28, MS.; cf. *History of the Normal School,* pp. 9-27 (both MSS. are in Salem Heights Normal School files).

[22] *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.

[23] Letter, Drees, Maria Stein, O., Aug. 16, 1908, to Sisters, Phoenix, Ariz., *sha157.*

[24] Cf. statement in Letter, Drees, Maria Stein, O., Jan. 10, 1909, to Sisters, Phoenix, Ariz., *sha158:* "When a person must answer between 40 and 50 New Year letters, that already takes a little time." Unfortunately most of the houses did not preserve his letters as did the Sisters in Phoenix.

[25] Letter, Drees, Maria Stein, O., Aug. 16, 1908, to Sisters, Phoenix, Ariz., *sha157.*

[26] Letter, Drees, Maria Stein, O., Mar. 3, 1908, to Sisters, Phoenix, Ariz., *sha156.*

[27] Letter, Drees, Maria Stein, O., Jan. 3, 1908, to Sisters, Phoenix, Ariz., *sha155.*

[28] Letter, Drees, Maria Stein, O., July 20, 1909, to Sisters, Phoenix, Ariz., *sha159.*

[29] *Chronik* II, p. 111.

[30] Copied on other side of Circular Letter, Mother M. Ludovica, Maria Stein, O., Oct. 10, 1909, to Sisters, *sha190.*

[31] Account of funeral, *Catholic Telegraph,* LXXVIII, Oct. 21, 1909.

[32] *Chronik* II, pp. 113-115.

[33] *Chronicle of the Kneipp Sanitarium,* I, 30-31; cf. *Chronik* II, p. 117.

[34] *Ibid.*, pp. 116, 118.

[35] *Ibid.*, pp. 121-123.

[36] *Ibid.*, p. 127.

Chapter V

A small brochure by John H. Antony, *Her Silver Jubilee,* Minster, 1912, is a tribute to Sister Angeline's educational work at Minster, Ohio. *Vital Problems of Catholic Education,* edited by Roy J. Deferrari, gives the status of the higher education of Sisters prior to 1911. For the early history of San Luis Rey, California, reference was made to Zephyrin Engelhardt, O. F. M., *San Luis Rey Mission,* San Francisco, 1921.

[1] Plus, S. J., *Meditations for Religious,* p. 392.

[2] *Chronik* II, p. 127.

[3] Antony, *Her Silver Jubilee,* "The History," p. 3.

[4] Her Auglaize County Teacher's Certificate bears the date 1879.

[5] *Sha480.*

[6] Antony, *op. cit.*, "Twenty-five Years in Minster," p. 7; cf. "Editorial," *Minster Post,* Dec. 29, 1912.

[7] Letter, Leo J. Schatzel, Warren, O., Dec. 26, 1929, to Sister M. Angeline, Salem Heights, Dayton, O., *sha441.*

[8] M. G., Apr. 23, 1936, *sha476.*

[9] Sister M. Angeline Betz, *Notes,* MS., *sha.*

[10] Antony, *op. cit.,* "Presentation," p. 8.

[11] *Ibid.*

[12] *History of the Normal School,* p. 6.

[13] Letter, Frank W. Miller, State Supt., Columbus, O., May 14, 1915, to Sister M. Angeline, Maria Stein, O., *sha440.*

[14] *Chronik* II, p. 138.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 116.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 130.

[17] "Community Chronicle," *Nuntius Aulae,* XXI:202-205, July 1938.

[18] Letter, Russ, Carthagena, O., June 26, 1913, to Mother Emma, Maria Stein, O., *sha390.*

[19] Letter, Quatman, Sidney, O., Sept. 27, 1899, to Sister M. Cecilia, Maria Stein, O., *sha440.*

[20] Letter, Miller, Columbus, O., May 11, 1914, to Sister M. Angeline, Maria Stein, O., *sha440.*

[21] *History of the Normal School,* p. 6.

[22] Deferrari, ed., *Vital Problems of Catholic Education,* p. 66.

[23] *History of the Normal School,* p. 6.

[24] *Ibid.,* p. 7.

[25] *Ibid.,* p. 8.

[26] *Ibid.,* p. 61.

[27] *Chronik* II, p. 136.

[28] Letter, T. H. Winters, Columbus, O., Nov. 19, 1919, to Sister M. Angeline, Maria Stein, O., *sha455.*

[29] This correspondence is in the files of the directress of schools, Salem Heights, Dayton, O.

[30] *Sisters of the Precious Blood Go West,* pp. 3-4, MS., *sha576.*

[31] The story of the founding of San Luis Rey Boarding School is based mostly on written accounts by Sister Electa and Sister Annetta.

[32] Engelhardt, O. F. M., *San Luis Rey Mission,* pp. 245-247.

[33] *Ibid., passim.*

[34] Luke XIV, 28-30.

[35] *Chronik* II, pp. 139, 164, 188.

[36] Normal School Files.

[37] Brunner, "Explanation of the Spirit of Our Congregation," *Book of Customs,* Part II, p. 160.

CHAPTER VI

The annals of the Congregation are written in German in *Chronik* I and in *Chronik* II to the year 1926. In *Chronik* II, p. 260, they begin to be written in English and are continued in a third volume, with the English title *Chronicle* III.

[1] Brunner, "Explanation of the Spirit of Our Congregation," *Book of Customs,* Part II, p. 135.

[2] Cf. I, 5, p. 180, and 7, p. 198.

[3] *Chronik* I, p. 291; II, p. 286.

[4] Letter, Moeller, Norwood, O., Apr. 6, 1916, to Mother Emma, Maria Stein, O., *sha329.*

[5] *Chronicle* III, p. 28.

[6] Letter, Shields, Wash., D. C., July 17, 1917, to Mother Emma, Maria Stein, O., *sha540.*

[7] Letter, Shields, Wash., D. C., Nov. 17, 1917, to Sister Victoria, Maria Stein, O., *sha541.*

[8] Letter, Moeller, Norwood, O., May 16, 1919, to Mother Emma, Maria Stein, O., *sha338.*

[9] Letter, Moeller, Norwood, O., Sept. 3, 1919, to Mother Emma, Maria Stein, O., *sha339.*

[10] Note by Sister M. Victoria, Salem Heights, Dayton, O., one of the best living authorities on the early history of the Congregation.

[11] *Chronik* II, p. 229.

[12] Remarks of Archbishop Moeller to community during visitation, Aug. 8, 1911, *sha310.*

[13] *sha354.*

[14] Account of closing services, *sha.*

[15] Letter, Schrembs per G. B. O'Toole, Toledo, O., Sept. 10, 1913, to Mother Emma, Maria Stein, O., *sha295*.

[16] Letter, Schrembs per Aug. J. Schwertner, Toledo, O., Mar. 15, 1915, to Mother Emma, Maria Stein, O., *sha396*.

[17] Written request signed by Henry Moeller, May 27, 1915, *sha325a* (his signature on the formal written request was his permission).

[18] Letter, Henry Moeller per Bernard Moeller, Cincinnati, O., Feb. 17, 1916, to Mother Emma, Maria Stein, O., *sha328a*.

[19] *Chronik* II, pp. 229-233.

[20] On the occasion of Mother Emma's golden jubilee celebration, Aug. 15, 1915. The writer was an eyewitness.

[21] Letter, Mother Emma, Maria Stein, O., n. d., to Members of Chapter, *sha353*.

[22] Circular Letter, Mother Emma, Maria Stein, O., June 21, 1912, to Members of Chapter, *sha354*.

[23] *A Word to Our Friends*, Aug. 15, 1913, *sha356*.

[24] Letter, Frank Westgerdes, Dayton, O., June 6, 1912, to Mother Emma, Maria Stein, O., *sha351*.

[25] Letter, Seifert, Maria Stein, O., Dec. 3, 1913, to Members of Chapter, *sha390;* cf. Letter, Sister Electa, Phoenix, Ariz., July 1, 1912, to Mother Emma, Maria Stein, O., *sha387*, and her letter of Dec. 15, 1913, *sha388*.

[26] *Chronik* II, p. 219.

[27] *Ibid.*, pp. 227-229.

[28] *Catholic Telegraph*, LXXXXII, Sept. 13, 1923.

[29] *Chronik* II, p. 241.

[30] *Ibid.*, pp. 214-215.

[31] Letter, Moeller, Norwood, O., July 1, 1921, to Mother Emma, Maria Stein, O., *sha344*.

[32] *Chronik* II, pp. 169-171.

[33] *Ibid.*, pp. 185-186.

[34] *Ibid.*, pp. 158-160.

[35] Circular Letter, Mother Emma, Maria Stein, O., Dec. 16, 1918, to Sisters of the Precious Blood, *sha360*.

CHAPTER VII

[1] Letter, Mother Emma, Phoenix, Ariz., Oct. 27, 1919, to Sisters of the Precious Blood, Maria Stein, O., *sha362*.

[2] Letter, Moeller, Norwood, O., Jan. 27, 1914, to Mother Emma, Maria Stein, O., *sha321*.

[3] Letter, Moeller, Norwood, O., May 4, 1915, to Mother Emma, Maria Stein, O., *sha324*.

[4] Letter, Moeller, Norwood, O., July 23, 1917, to Mother Emma, Maria Stein, O., *sha332*.

[5] Copy of *List of Days on Which Blessed Sacrament May Be Exposed in the Chapel, Mary, Help of Christians, Maria Stein, O.*, May 17, 1918, and *Days of Exposition Granted by Archbishop Moeller*, n. d., *sha335a*.

[6] *Chronik* II, p. 258.

[7] *Catholic Telegraph*, LXXXXIV, May 21 and June 10, 1925.

[8] *Chronik* II, p. 263.

[9] *Ibid.*

[10] *Einer frommen Mutter*, pp. 188-89; cf. *Lebensordnung der Schw. vom Kost. Blute*, St. Alphonse, O., 1846, #67; 1889, #6 and #4.

[11] Letter, Moeller, Cincinnati, O., Aug. 8, 1906, to Mother Josephine, Maria Stein, O., *sha303*.

[12] Remarks by Archbishop Moeller on revising the Rule, Aug. 8, 1911, *sha310.*

[13] *Chronik* II, p. 263.

[14] This date is substantiated by a letter, Harold J. Bowers, Supervisor of Certification, Columbus, O., Apr. 30, 1940, to Sister Simplicia, Dayton, O., *sha495.*

[15] Letter, Sister Angeline, Salem Heights, n. d., to H. B. Alberty, Supervisor of Teacher Training, Columbus, O., copy, *sha.*

[16] Letter, W. W. Boyd, College Counsellor, Columbus, O., Oct. 15, 1932, to Sister M. Angeline, Dayton, O., *sha460.*

[17] Letter, Carl Ryan, Cincinnati, O., Sept. 10, 1936, to Sister Angeline, Dayton, O., copy, *sha475.*

[18] *Chronik* II, pp. 280-281.

[19] Sister Angeline, *Private Journal,* MS., *sha.*

[20] *Chronicle* III, p. 1.

[21] Cf. Normal School Files.

[22] Sister M. Basildis, *Report of the Vacation School at Mount Carmel,* July 5-Aug. 7, 1932, MS., *sha.*

[23] Edward Stuhlmueller, *Summary of Vacation School Conducted by Sisters of the Precious Blood,* MS., *sha580.*

[24] Sister M. Basildis, *Report of the Vacation School at Batavia,* 1933-1935, MS., *sha581.*

[25] *Reports of the Religious Vacation Schools Conducted by the Sisters of the Precious Blood,* 1932-1944, MS.

[26] Letter, Srs. Flavia and Benita, Ray, Ariz., July 10, 1939, to Sister M. Simplicia, Dayton, O., in *Reports of the Vacation Schools.*

[27] *Catholic Telegraph,* XCIII, July 17, 1924.

[28] *Chronik* II, pp. 263-64.

[29] *Catholic Telegraph,* XCVII, Sept. 20, 1928.

[30] *Annals of Regina High School,* MS., *sha.*

[31] *Catholic Telegraph,* XCVII, Nov. 29, 1928.

[32] *Ibid.*

[33] *Annals of Regina High School.*

[34] *The Regina Ancile,* 1932.

[35] Sister Electa Fleck, *An Account of San Luis Rey Mission School,* MS., *sha.*

[36] *Catholic Telegraph,* XC, Aug. 11, 1921.

[37] *Ibid.,* XCII, Oct. 11, 1923.

[38] *Ibid.,* XCVIII, Oct. 3, 1929.

[39] *Chronik* II, p. 281.

[40] *Ibid.,* p. 286.

[41] Sister M. Alexine Webkin, *Denver, Colorado,* MS., *sha.*

[42] Circular Letter, Mother Agreda, Salem Heights, Dayton, O., Dec. 18, 1929, to Sisters, *sha375.*

[43] Letter, Mother Ludovica, Maria Stein, O., June 8, 1916, to Sister Victoria, Fort Wayne, Ind., *sha199.*

CHAPTER VIII

[1] *Chronik* II, p. 268.

[2] The new Constitution received papal approbation for a period of seven years in 1937. *Our Constitution* was printed in 1938.

[3] *Chronik* II, p. 297. *Our Customs* was printed and distributed in 1941.

[4] *Ibid.* This prayerbook is in its second edition, 1942.

[5] Circular Letter, Mother M. Agreda, Rome, Italy, . . . 1933, to Sisters of the Precious Blood, p. 1, *sha377.*

[6] *Ibid.,* p. 2.

[7] *Ibid.,* pp. 3-4.

[8] *Ibid.,* pp. 5-7.

[9] *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 10.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 11.

[12] Mother Agreda, *Bulletin II*, Schellenberg, Liechtenstein, Oct. 21, 1933, p. 1, *sha378.*

[13] *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

[14] Letter, Sister M. Veronica, Schellenberg, Jan. 29, 1934, to Mother Agreda, Dayton, O., *sha470.*

[15] Sister Adelaide, *An Account of Mother Brunner*, pp. 29-31, MS., *sha5.*

[16] *Ibid.*

[17] *Ibid.*, pp. 32-34.

[18] Placidus Baselgia, "Geschichte des Schlosses Loewenbergs," *Nuntius Aulae*, V:125, Oct. 1894.

[19] Feb. 2, 1834; cf. *scab8.*

[20] Sister Adelaide, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 38.

[22] *Ibid.*, pp. 39-40.

[23] A. Tuor's Testimony, Slanz, Nov. 6, 1933, copy in *An Account of Mother Brunner*, pp. 40-41.

[24] *Ibid.*, pp. 42-44.

[25] *Ibid.*, pp. 45-47.

[26] Mother M. Agreda, data regarding portrait on plaque formerly hanging below it.

[27] Letter, McNicholas, Norwood, O., Jan. 23, 1934, to Mother Agreda, Dayton, O., *sha420.*

[28] *Chronicle* III, pp. 7-8.

[29] Sister M. Adelaide, *Hundredth Anniversary Pageant, 1834-1934*, p. 9.

[30] *Chronicle* III, pp. 7-8.

[31] *Attestations to Favors Received:* Statement of Physician, Francis F. Kramer, M. D., Feb. 21, 1939, MS., *sha.*

[32] *Ibid.:* Attestation to Cure, Mother M. Agreda.

[33] Another great sorrow during the Jubilee year was the defection of five Sisters, four of them from the same house. As a result, the school in which they had been teaching was given up in the course of the next term; cf. *Chronicle* III, p. 8.

[34] Letter, Mother Emma, Phoenix, Ariz., Oct. 27, 1919, to Sisters of the Precious Blood, Maria Stein, O., *sha362.*

[35] *Memoirs of Mother Emma, C. PP. S.*, preserved in Hall of Memories.

[36] Letter, Schrembs, Cleveland, O., Dec. 19, 1935, to Mother Agreda, Dayton, O., *sha471.*

[37] Letter, Benzing, San Francisco, Cal., Oct. 30, 1935, to Sister M. Celeste, Phoenix, Ariz., *sha470.*

[38] *Catholic Telegraph-Register*, CV, Nov. 7, 1935.

INDEX

Ackerman, Father Albin, 44
Ackermann, Father John, 183, 187-188, 191
Ackermann, Placidus, Abbot of Maria Stein Abbey (1804-1841), 21, 26-27, 29-30, 32, 34-35, 39, 41-42, 73, 76, 92, 129
Act of Separation, 239
Acuto, Italy, 227
Adelaide Schmerge, Sister M., 130, 144, 199, 232
Adelaide Walz, Sister M., 366, 380, 403, 412
Africa, 44
African language (Congo), 55
Afton, O., 353
Agreda Sperber, Mother M., secretary-treasurer of Kneipp Sanitarium, 286; elected secretary general and appointed local superior of Kneipp Sanitarium, 316; elected Mother General, 342; change in Sisters' habit, 349; directs building of Regina High School and Maria-Joseph Home, 359-362; present at Mother Ludovica's death, 363; re-elected, 365; plans for Centenary, 365-366; trip to Rome, 366-370; to Schellenberg, 370-371; to Sagens and Loewenberg, 372-373; exhumation of Mother Brunner's remains, 374-376; return to America, 377-379; victim of automobile accident, 381; local superior of Kneipp Sanitarium, 397; death, 399; mentioned, 391-392
Aix-la-Chapelle, 292
Albano, Italy, 78, 81-82, 179
Albers, Joseph, Auxiliary Bishop of Cincinnati, 379
Albertina Schleinzer, Sister M., 125
Albertini, Father Francesco, 53-54
Albrecht, Father Joseph, 66, 84, 126, 132, 196; account of his defection from the Congregation, 200-204; carried away relic, 216
Albrecht, Mother Mary Ann, *see* Mary Ann Albrecht
Albrecht, Sister M. Rosalie, *see* Rosalie Albrecht
Albrinck, Father J. C., 239
Alda Spegele, Sister M., 398
Aldegundis Wuest, Sister M., 273-275
Alena Braun, Sister M., 401
Alerding, Herman Joseph, Bishop of Fort Wayne, 214, 286, 288
Alexander, Father, C. P., 246
Algonquin tribes, 121
Alhambra, Ariz., 354, 399
Alodia Miller, Sister M., 382, 402
Alois II, Prince of the House of Liechtenstein, 182-184
Aloysia Galezia, Sister M., 344-345
Aloysia Landoll, Sister M., 402
Aloysius, St., six Sundays of, 42, 75; relic of, 69, 215; devotion to, 69, 84; mentioned, 69, 75, 182-183
Alps, 3-4, 18, 370; Lepontine, 37
Alsace, 80, 105, 129, 192
Altermatt, Urs Joseph, 26
Alvada, O., 331, 402, 415
Amabilis Neumeister, Sister M., 403
America, 268
American province of the Sisters of the Precious Blood, 228
Anagni diocese, 227
Ancona, Italy, 165
Anderledy, Father Anthony M., S. J., 217
Anderton, Beth, R. N., 402
Angeline Betz, Sister M., appointed directress of schools, 316; qualifications, 316-319; silver jubilee, 319-320; organization of normal school, 320-321, 323-324, 326-327; visitation of western missions, 327-329; elected counselor, 342; secretary general, 351-352; death, 398; mentioned, 332, 365, 391
Annetta Schneider, Sister M., 290, 330
Annunciation Convent, Minster, O., 3, 413; *see* Visitation Convent
Anselma Rufle, Sister M., 292
Anthony, Brother, 219
Anthony Florian, Prince of the House of Liechtenstein, 181
Anthony, St., 269
"Apostles' Hall," 270
Apostolic Missionary, title of Father Brunner, 60, 192
Appia Kleinuebing, Sister M., 233
Appian Way, 294
Archconfraternity of the Most Precious Blood, 13, 53-54
Archives, 416

Armella Raufer, Sister M., 158
Ashland, O., 98
Aspirants, *see* Juniorate
Assisi, Italy, 370
Assumption Church, Nashville, 210
Assumption School, Cincinnati, 357
Assumption School, Nashville, 210-211, 317
Athenaeum of Ohio, Teachers' College, Cincinnati, 351
Attala Missler, Sister M., 252, 329
Auer, Father B. O., 308
Auglaize County, O., 122, 149
Augustine, St., 21, 316
Austermann, Elizabeth, 183
Austermann, Father Bernard, third American provincial, C. PP. S., 205-206, 208, 211, 214, 219, 221-222, 225, 233, 256, 390
Australia, 205

Baal, Monsignor J. J., Chancellor of Chur diocese, 42-43, 57-58, 88
Bachman, Father, 317
Back Woods, extract from, 232-233
Baden, 160, 200
Baden, Monsignor Charles E., 334-380
Baker, Harry H., Mayor of Norwood, 358
Baldwin of Flanders, Count, 16
Balthasar, one of the Magi, 52
Baltimore Volkszeitung, 268
Balzers, Liechtenstein, 187-188
Banning, Cal., 276
Barnhorn, Clement, 377
Bartels, Father Francis, 123
Bartholomew, St., 153
Basil, St., 406
Basildis Spegele, Sister M., 353, 397, 401
Basle, Council of, 20
Basle, Switz., 29, 73, 82, 90, 155, 160, 180
Batavia, O., 353-354
Battagli, John Fidelis, Bishop of Chur, 274-275
Bauer, Frances (Francesca, the "hermitess"), 105-107
Baumgartner, Fridolin, 92
Beccarelli, H., 375
Beccarelli, J. A., 375
Beibelberg estate, 6, 8, 46, 64
Beinwil Abbey, 20
Bellefontaine, O., 292, 331
Belloc, Hilaire, 4
Belmont, Lords of, 37
"Bend," The, near Sherwood, O., 354, 391
Bendern, Liechtenstein, 182, 189
Benedict, St., 27, 32, 146
Benedict XV, Pope, 390
Benedictine Fathers, 155, 416; Nuns, 85
Benerberg, 46
Benita Sielemann, Sister M., 304
Benning, H. J., 327
Benzing, Father Novatus, O. F. M., 290-291, 383
Bergmann, A., 375
Berissima Schlachter, Sister M., 402
Berlin, O., 220
Bernadette, St., 399
Bertina Pool, Sister M., 402
Betz, Sister M. Angeline, *see* Angeline Betz
Beuke, Father Francis, C. PP. S., 368
Biaschelli, Don Luigi, seventh Moderator General, C. PP. S., 297
"Big Bend State" (Tennessee), 206
Bigot, Father William V., 220
Bimmel, Fred, 283
Blanchard River, Putnam Co., O., 128
Blodau, Mrs. Gus (Loula Huff), 317
Blue Jacket, Shawnee Indian Chief, 121
Blue Water Creek, near Loretto, Tenn., 211
Blutritt, 16
Bobst, Father Martin, 85, 91, 109
Bochele, Father John Baptist, 129
Bodensee, 370
Boebner, Father Benedict, C. PP. S., 361
Boehmer, Father J. Leo, 213
Boehne, Father George, 127
Bombay, India, 45
Bonaparte, Napoleon, *see* Napoleon Bonaparte
Boniface, St., 406
Bosnia, 227, 294
Bossi, John George, *see* Bishop of Chur
Boston, Mass., 412
Botkins, O., 332
Boyle, Hugh C., Bishop of Pittsburgh, 288
Bozen, 297
Bridget Meyer, Sister M., 129, 132
Brigid, St., 406
Brixen, 190, 297
Brixen, Bishop of, 178
Brookland, Washington, D. C., 398
Brophy College, Phoenix, 331
Brothers of Mary, 332
Brunner, Anna Maria, eldest daughter of Joseph John Baptist Brunner, 44

Brunner, Anna Maria, second daughter of Mother Brunner, 9, 44

Brunner, Father Mary Francis de Sales, founder of the Congregation of the Precious Blood in Switzerland and America: birth and baptism, 9; enters Benedictine Abbey of Maria Stein, 20; qualifications for priesthood, 21; novitiate, 21-22; solemn profession, 22; his spiritual diary (*Tagebuch*), 22; affection for his family, 23; ordination, 23-24; offices as a Benedictine, 24; missionary tours, 24-25; *Die geheimnissvolle Hand,* 25; becomes a Trappist, 26-31; writes *Suesse Abendstunden,* 29; leaves Trappist abbey, 30; returns to Switzerland, 31-35; mission labors in Grisons, 35-36; begins educational project at Castle Loewenberg, 37-43; plans to go to African Congo, 49-50; trip to Rome, 50, 55-56; returns to Switzerland, 56-58; second trip to Rome, 58-60; receives title of Apostolic Missionary, 60; becomes spiritual director of "poor Sisters," 62; Gruenenwald project, 65; writes life of Mother Brunner, *Einer frommen Mutter,* 6, 67; present at her death, 68-69; his reaction to it, 71-74; establishes orphanage at Vendelincourt, 74-76; becomes a missionary of the Precious Blood, 78-79; returns to Switzerland, 79; plans for Eschenweiler project, 80; opening of seminary at Loewenberg, 82-84; restoration of *Drei Aehren,* 85-86; plans for opening mission field in America, 88; preparations, 89-90; the voyage, 91-94; arrival in America, 95; up the Mississippi, 95-98; stopover in Cincinnati, 98-99; journey to Peru, O., 99-101; establishes mission house at Peru, 105-108; founds convent at New Riegel, 108-109, 111-112, 114-117; at Thompson, 117-120; at Maria Stein, 123-124; sends Mother Mary Ann abroad for candidates, 125; founds convents at Glandorf and Maria Camp, 127-128; at Greenwood, 129-130; at Minster, 130-131; at Himmelgarten, 131-132; at Mary's Home, 132-138; at Egypt, 138-140; as first American provincial, 143-152; return to Europe, 153-162; second trip abroad, 162-168; third trip, 168-172; last trip, 173-175; the Kronburg adventure, 176-178; final trip to Rome, 178-180; foundation at Schellenberg, 180-186; last illness, 187-189; detailed account of his death and burial in Mother Johanna's letter, 189-190; inscription on tomb, 192; his character, 192-196; mentioned, 198, 200-201, 214, 215-216, 239, 241-242, 250, 261, 274, 284, 332-333, 344, 349, 390, 392, 405, 416

Brunner, Father Urs Joseph, S. J., 9, 23, 26, 45

Brunner, Isidore Matthias, son of Joseph John Baptist Brunner, 45, 167

Brunner, John Baptist, married to Mother Brunner, 8; co-operated in educating children, 11-12; last illness and death, 18-19

Brunner, Joseph John Baptist, second son of Mother Brunner, 9, 44

Brunner, Maria Anna, eldest daughter of Mother Brunner, 9

Brunner, Maria Anna Frances (Sister Scholastica), 9, 23, 45-46, 160

Brunner, Mother Maria Anna, birth, baptism, and parentage, 5; family, early life and training, 6; service in Brunner household, 7; marriage, 8-9; training of children, 10-13, 193; esteem of priesthood, 10, 83; Sunday observance, 11-12; almsgiving, 13-14; devotion to Mary, 17; illness and death of husband, 18-19; departure from Muemliswil, 47; pilgrimage to Rome, 51-52, 54-55, 58-60; suffers from malaria in Rome, 58; returns to Loewenberg, 61; starts community for perpetual adoration of the Precious Blood, 62-64; last illness, 66-69; last wish, 3, 68; death and burial, 70-71; *Einer frommen Mutter,* her life written by Father Brunner, 6, 67; his reaction to her death, 71-74; her life translated into Italian, 166; her devotion to relics, 215; her tomb visited by Mother Emma, 298; insisted on wholly black habit, 349; her sojourn in Rome (1833) recalled in Jubilee Year (1933), 366; her remains sought by Mother Agreda, 269; account of exhumation, 372-377; enshrinement of her relics at Salem Heights, 377-379; her portrait by Chambers, 378; her intercessory power invoked, 381; memory recalled, 386; 100th anni-

versary of her death, 392; Father Marling's tribute in Centenary sermon, 408.
Brunner, Nicholas Joseph, *see* Brunner, Father Mary Francis de Sales
Brunnerdale Novitiate, near Canton, O., 362, 414
Bryant, Ind., 402, 415
Buchenbach, 158
Buch-ong-e-helos, Delaware Indian Chief, 121
Buergaenzle, Maire, 84
Buesser, Henry, 92
Buffalo, N. Y., 110, 130
Burkettsville, O., 292, 334, 399, 414
Butz, Father Joseph, C. PP. S., 90, 157
Byrne, Thomas Sebastian, Bishop of Nashville, 212

California gold rush, 173
California province of the Congregation of the Most Precious Blood, 205
Candidates, *see* Postulants
Candidus, St., 216
Canton, O., 99, 106, 118, 302, 414
Capaul, Father Sebastian, 85-86, 165
Capeder, Father Peter Anthony, C. PP. S., 82, 91
Capuchins, 34, 38, 40, 49, 190-191
Cardinal Protector, *see* Sincero, Luigi; Fumasoni-Biondi, Pietro
Carl, Caspar von, Bishop of Chur, 88, 155, 158, 161, 182, 185, 191
Carlsbad, Cal., 354
Caroboti, Captain of the *Rex,* 392
Carrigiet, Father, 376
Carthagena, O., 199, 233, 254, 273, 309, 311, 402, 414, 416
Casanova, Father, Chancellor of Chur diocese, 156, 165
Casanova, Herr, 159
Cassella, O., 129
Castracane, Francesco Cardinal, 73, 78
Catherine of Alexandria, St., 184
Catherine of Siena, St., 406
Catholic Charities, Cincinnati Board of, 334
Catholic News, 268
Catholic Sisters' College, Brookland, Washington, D. C., 323, 325, 334, 398
Catholic Telegraph, extracts from, 111, 199, 254-255, 302-303; files of, 417
Catholic University of America, Washington, D. C., 324
Cattani, Father Umberto, 377, 392
Cavallo, Monte, near Rome, 55, 166
Cavelti, Anton, 375
Cavelti, Laurens, 375
Cavelti, Moritz, 375
Cecilia Lang, Sister M., broadens normal school curriculum, 251; draws up uniform course of studies, 252-253; appointed directress of normal school, 270; elected directress of schools, 278; secretary general, 299; death, 343-344; mentioned, 232-233, 240, 245-246, 267, 276, 307, 317, 322, 391
Celesta Grimmelsman, Sister M., 401
Celestine Landoll, Sister M., 398
Celina, O., 198, 247, 401-402, 414
Centenary, of foundation (1934), preparations for, 365-379; celebrations, 379-380; accidents during, 380-381; of coming to America (1944), celebration, 404; sermon by Father Marling, 405-409; tribute of Archbishop McNicholas, 410-411
Cesena, Italy, 78, 165
Chaignon la Rose, Pierre de, 412
Chambers, C. Bosseron, 378
Chaminade High School, Dayton, 332
Chancery, Cincinnati, 402, 413
Chaplet of the Precious Blood, 148
Chapter, general, original method of electing, 240, 243; election of first, 244-245
Charitas Drescher, Sister M., 158
Charles VI, Holy Roman Emperor, 181
Chartrand, Joseph, Bishop of Indianapolis, 347
Chickasaw, O., 401, 414
Chickasaw Public School, 414
Cholera epidemic of 1849-1850, 130-131
Christian Brothers, 176
Christian Rule of Life, by Father John B. Bochele, publ. by Father Brunner, 129
Christina Grimmer, Sister M., 116, 150, 232
Chur, Bishop of, 43, 72, 74, 81; *see* Carl, Caspar von; Battagli; Vincenz
Chur, Canton Grisons, Switz., 35, 37, 50, 88, 155-156, 164, 190, 292
Cincinnati, 87, 91, 94-95, 98, 117, 122, 151, 169-170, 198, 219, 240, 246, 270, 276, 308, 325, 334-336, 351, 355, 376, 379, 382-383, 398-399, 404, 414
Cincinnati archdiocese, high school system of, 355, 358; archives of, 416; mentioned, 202-203, 347, 362, 405, 412-413
Cincinnati diocese, 97

Cincinnati Homestead Society, 206-208
Cincinnati Provincial Council, 169
Citailg, Oberhalbstein, Grisons, Switz., 48, 75, 83, 157, 164-165
Clara Meisen, Sister, *see* Meisen, Elizabeth
Clare, St., 406
Claude de la Colombière, Blessed, 159
Claudia Kreutzer, Sister M., 401
Clementina Enneking, Sister M., 342
Clementine Ferr, Sister (Ruma, Ill.), 228
Cleopha Ludwig, Sister M., 399, 402
Cleveland, 127, 154, 168-169, 197, 303-304, 332, 414
Cleveland diocese, 208
Cloverdale, O., 402, 415
Coelina Mueller, Sister M., 254
Coelina Schick, Sister M., 366
Coldwater, O., 402, 414
Coldwater Public School, 414
Cole Camp, Mo., 354, 400
Colette Madigan, Sister M., 302
Collegeville, Ind., 334, 414
Colletta Hamant, Sister M., 402
Colmar, Alsace, 85, 163
Cologne, 272, 292
Columbus Grove, O., 331, 415
Columbus, O., 233, 267, 327
Conaty, Thomas James, Bishop of Monterey and Los Angeles, 329
Concordia, St., 215
Confraternity of Perpetual Adoration of the Precious Blood, 183
Confraternity of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, 155
Confraternity of the Precious Blood, 54
Congo, Africa, 49-50, 55-56
Congregation of the Most Precious Blood, founded in Rome, 53; Father Brunner joins, 78-79; established in Switzerland, 79, 82-85; transferred to America, 107 ff.; compared to Holy Family, 141; to Theban Legion, 141-142; mode of government (*directorium*), 143-145; community life of, 144-152; failure of California province, 205; established in Tennessee, 205-214; separation of Sisters' community from Fathers' and Brothers', 233-234; organization of the Sisters' community, 239-247, 365-366; educational advancement, 251-255, 270-271, 306-308, 316-330, 350-360, 391; building projects, 267-271, 282-287, 301-302, 304, 312-314, 338-342, 355-361; relations with Schellenberg foundation, 272-275, 370-371; missions in the West, 290-291, 304-306, 327-331, 354-355; Centenary celebration, 378-379; 100th anniversary of founding in America, 404-411
Conrad, Bishop of Constance, 47-48
Consolata Loth, Sister M., 317
Constitution of Confederation, 156
Constitution of the Sisters of the Precious Blood, original (1887), 239-244; second draft (1888), 246; approval of, 247; revision of Rules and Constitutions, 365-366; papal approval, 390, 397; *see* Rule; Rules and Constitutions
Corona Muckenberger, Sister M., 245, 278
Council, general, method of nomination and election of members, 243; election of first, 245
Cowes, Isle of Wight, 92-93
Crow Wing Indian Reservation, Minn., 203
Crow Wing Trail, Minn., 202
Cruser, St., 216
Cunegunda, Mother, *see* Kunigunda Wehrle
Curé d'Ars, 197, 256; *see* John Vianney, St.
Curia Rhaetorum, 37
Custar, O., 316
Customs, Book of, 366

Dafrosa Huber, Sister M., 291
Danube River, 284
Dayton flood, 315
Dayton, O., 150-151, 254, 271, 283, 332, 339-342, 354-355, 361-363, 376, 383, 400, 403-404, 413-416
Decima Weis, Sister M., 330
Defiance, O., 150
Delaware Indians, 121
Delle, France, 25
Dentinger, Father Martin, C. PP. S., 264, 268
Denver, Colo., 403, 413
Desgenettes, Abbé, 91, 155
Devanney, Eva, 361
Dickman, Father Bernard, C. PP. S., 233
Dietramszell, 46
Digna Spiegelhalter, Sister M., 158
Directress of schools, regularly elected member of the Council, 278; *see* Cecilia Lang; Victoria Drees; Angeline Betz; Rosalie Alt; Simplicia McGreevy

Domestic service, in Loewenberg castle, 58, 62, 81, 83-84, 333; St. Charles Seminary, St. Joseph's College, St. Mary's Novitiate, 333-334, 414; Fenwick Club, 334, 398; Catholic Sisters' College, 334-335, 398; St. Theresa's Home, 335-336, 397; St. Gregory's Seminary, archbishop's residence, Norwood, 336, 413-414; Mount St. Mary Seminary, Brunnerdale Novitiate, episcopal residence, Denver, 362, 413-414; episcopal residence, Hyde Park, Cincinnati, 399, 413; chancery, Cincinnati, 413

Dominican Sisters, 210-211, 213

Donata Wessels, Sister M., 208, 211-212

Drees, Father Henry, fourth American provincial, C. PP. S., 222; life sketch, 225-226; visits Rome, 229, 231; remains spiritual director of Sisters, 229; transfers normal school to Greenwood, 231-232; aids in act of separation from priests' community, 233-234; appointed director of Sisters after separation, 234-235; chairman of committee on Sisters' Constitution, 239, 242-243; receives vows of Sisters, 248; spiritual director and chaplain at Maria Stein, 282, 285-286, 292, 308-310; last illness and death, 310-312; mentioned, 251, 320, 390

Drees, Sister M. Victoria, *see* Victoria Drees

Drei Aehren, 85-86, 88, 90, 163, 184

Drusus, Nero Claudius, 37

Dub, France, monastery of, 34

Duluth, Minn., 347

Durgini, Father Martin, 190

Dwenger, Joseph, Bishop of Fort Wayne, 131, 170, 198-199, 214, 217, 226, 256, 268, 391

Eberhard, Abbot of *Maria Einsiedeln,* 47.

Echert, Brother Bernard, 86

Edmunda Schemmel, Sister M., 245

Education, works of, 64, 116, 119, 130, 149-151, 208, 210-212, 231-232, 251-255, 270-271, 306-308, 316-330, 350-360, 391; *see* directress of schools; normal school; schools; schools, vacation

Egypt Convent, 138-140, 247, 280, 337

Egypt, O., 138, 247, 414

Egypt Public School, 139, 414

Einsiedeln, Canton Schwyz, Switz., 47, 81, 83, 155, 164, 175, 180, 292-293, 392; *see Maria Einsiedeln,* shrine of

Eisenring, Father Thomas, C. PP. S., 221, 233

Elder, William Henry, Archbishop of Cincinnati, 222-223, 229-230, 233-234, 240-248, 257, 262, 264-266, 268-271, 276-278, 286, 298, 322, 365, 390, 401

Electa Fleck, Sister M., 254, 327, 329-330, 381, 401

Emelita Timmerman, Sister M., 402

Emlin Institute, Carthagena, O., 199

Emma Nunlist, Mother M., goes West with Mother Ludovica, 276; elected Mother General, 278; life and character, 280-282; completes building program at Maria Stein, 382-383; answers Bishop Byrne's plea to keep Sisters in Tenn., 121; trip to Europe, 292-298; attends beatification of Gaspar del Bufalo, 294-296; audience with Pius X, 296-297; succeeded by Mother Josephine, 299; superior in Kneipp Sanitarium and Phoenix, 304-306; re-elected Mother General, 314-315; gives summer conferences, 323-324; encourages education, 325-326, 332; trip to Phoenix, 327; opening of San Luis Rey Mission School, 328-331; various projects, 333-336; sale of old convents, 337-339; plans for building new motherhouse in Dayton, 339-342; elected first assistant to Mother Agreda, 342; zeal for perpetual adoration and exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, 345-346, 348; directs building of San Luis Rey Academy, 360; present at Mother Ludovica's death, 363; on committee to revise Rules and Constitutions, 365; her love for travel, 381-382; victim of fatal accident, 382-383; tribute of Archbishop McNicholas, 384-386; mentioned, 368, 377, 390-392

English Channel, 125

English language, 150, 278, 307, 326

Enneking, Mrs. Mary, 232

Erlinsbach, Switz., 280

Ernestina Dehm, Sister M., 326

Eschenweiler, 80, 84

Escondido, Cal., 354

Esperanza Poll, Sister M., 291

Estavayer, Canton Fribourg, Switz., 45

Eternal City, *see* Rome

Ettingen Baths, Canton Basle, Switz., 31
Etzel, Mount, 47
Euphemia Goldschmid, Sister M., 147
Eureka, Cal., 205
Eusebia Fleck, Sister M., 381
Eustachia Moes, Sister M., 316
Euthalia Wolfert, Sister M., 199
Evrard, Father Charles, 168
Exhumation of Mother Brunner's remains, 374-376

Fabiola, by Cardinal Wiseman, 294
Farine, Seraphine, 74, 76
Fasser, Father Joachim, C. PP. S., 115
Fathers of the Precious Blood, *see* Congregation of the Most Precious Blood
Feehan, Patrick A., Bishop of Nashville, 206-207, 210
Feger, Father Lawrence, 162
Fehring, John, 379
Feldkirch, Austria, 85, 175, 181, 183, 186, 188, 297, 374, 417
Felicia Kehl, Sister M., 334
Felicula Dentz, Sister M., 161
Female Society of the Precious Blood, former legal title, 233
Fenwick Club, Cincinnati, 334, 398
Fenwick, Edward, Bishop of Cincinnati, 34, 87, 416
Fetz, Carl, 162
Fidelis, St., 216
Floersch, John A., Archbishop of Louisville, 317, 391
Florence, Italy, 297
Fluri, Caroline, daughter of Anna Maria Brunner Fluri, 44
Fluri, Urs Joseph, husband of Anna Maria Brunner Fluri, 44
Fond du Lac, Wis., 398
Fort Recovery, O., 122, 402, 414
Fort Washington (Cincinnati), 121
Fort Wayne diocese, 214
Fort Wayne, Ind., 226, 286, 288, 363, 415
Fourvières, Mount, 159
France, during Revolution, 8-9; era of Napoleon, 17
Francis Joseph I, Emperor of Austria, 185
Francis of Assisi, St., 135, 406
Francis Xavier, St., 84, 88, 94, 165
Franciscan Brothers, 291
Franciscan Fathers, 305
Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, 367-368
Franzoni, Jacob Cardinal, Prefect of the Propaganda, 78, 88
Freiburg, Archbishop of, 172
Freiburg, Baden, 29, 160, 167, 171, 175, 292
French language, 22, 24, 93, 105, 169
French Revolution, 8, 52, 59, 129
Freriks, Father Celestin, C. PP. S., 281
Fribourg, Canton, 156
Fribourg, Switz., 45
Fridolin, St., 216
Fridolina Hess, Sister M., 132
Friedrichshafen, 370
Friesen, Upper Alsace, 65
Fuerstenburg, Tyrol, 38
Fulda, O., 254, 292
Fulgentia Armbruster, Sister M., 382
Fulton, Cincinnati, 270
Fumasoni-Biondi, Pietro Cardinal, 398

Galatians, 405
Gallardo, Father Dominic, O. F. M., 330
Garrel, Oldenburg, 225
Garrett, Ind., 254
Gartner, Father J. M., acquisition and enshrining of the relics, 216-219; last illness and death, 220; reasons for relics at Maria Stein, 221-222
Gaspar del Bufalo, Blessed, brief sketch of his life, 52-54; his beatification, 294-297; mentioned, 78, 83, 98, 165, 169, 174, 179, 190-191, 195, 226, 241-242, 286, 292, 347, 368, 390, 392
Gaspar, one of the Magi, 52
Gebharda Spitznagel, Sister M., 304, 401
Geiermann, Dr. William, 284
Genevieve Benkert, Sister M., 129
Genevieve Koselke, Sister M., 304
Gengler, Father E. C., C. PP. S., 398
Genoa, 56, 57-58
Gerarda Meder, Sister M., 401
German-Austrian Province of the Sisters Adorers of the Most Precious Blood, 227
German immigrants, 88, 122-123, 168
German language, 105-106, 150, 225, 326
Germantown, Mo., 254, 304
Gersheim, Bavaria, 247
Gethsemani Cave, Rome City, Ind., 287
Gibraltar, 367
Girty, Simon, 121
Giusti, Via, Rome, 368
Glandorf Convent, 126-127, 144, 199, 247, 271, 337-338

Glandorf, O., 126-128, 153, 198-199, 231, 337-338
Glandorf Public High School, 331
Glandorf Public School, 251, 327, 414
Glasner, Mr., 118
Glottertal, Baden, 197
Glynn, Mrs. John R., 361
Glynwood, O., 354
Golden Gate, Ariz., 400
Good Samaritan Hospital, Dayton, 400
Government Indian Reservation School, Phoenix, 305, 354
Grace Pratt, Sister M., 325-326, 334, 357
Grace, Thomas L., Bishop of St. Paul, 203-204
Grand Rapids, Mich., 228
Grandfontaine, 82
Graubuenden, *see* Grisons, Canton
Gravois Mills, Mo., 354, 399
Greenville, O., 199
Greenville, Treaty of, 87
Greenwood Convent, 128-129, 135, 197, 199, 231-232, 269-270, 282, 318, 338, 343-344
Greenwood, O., 128
Gregory XVI, Pope, 35, 77-78, 80, 390
Greivenkamp, Father George, C. PP. S., 341
Griessmeier, Father Xavier, C. PP. S., 206-209
Grimm, Father Eugene, C. PP. S., 313
Grimmer, Mr. (*der reiche Grimmer*), 116
Grisons, Canton, Switz., 34-35, 37, 80-81, 181
Grotenrath, Father Roy F., C. PP. S., 402-403
Groth, Father Norbert, C. PP. S., 261
Gruenenwald, O., *see* Greenwood, O.
Gruenenwald, Parish Friesen, Canton Hersingen, Upper Alsace, 24, 65, 129
Gruenfelder, Mother M. Johanna, *see* Johanna Gruenfelder
Gschwind, Stephen, 92
Guadalupe, Ariz., 400
Guelph, Henry, 15
Guelph III, 16
Guelph IV, 16
Gyr, Domiano, 26

Habertheuer, Father, 171
Habit, religious, 63; changes in, 349-350
Hagendorf, 25
Hagg, Father J. B., 178
Hahn, Father Florian, C. PP. S., 276-277
Hahne, Mrs. Frank A., 361
Haiti, 94
Hall of Memories, 389-392
Hamburger, Father Mark, C. PP. S., 303
Hamilton, O., 400
Hanover, O., 98
Harmar, General Josiah, 121
Havre (le Havre, Havre-de-Grâce), 91, 154-155, 163, 171, 180, 416
Hebrews, Epistle to the, 405
Hedwig Flamm, Sister M., 140, 232
Heitz, Father Joseph, C. PP. S., 320
Helvetic Republic Confederation, 17
Hengartner, Father Isidore, C. PP. S., 208-209
Henneberry, Father Patrick, C. PP. S., 138, 168-169, 171, 205
Henni, John Martin, Bishop of Milwaukee, 88, 106, 216
Henry III, Emperor, 16
"Herald of the Precious Blood," title of Blessed Gaspar del Bufalo, 195
Herman Greiwe, Brother, 138
Herold des kostbaren Blutes, 417
Herschfeld, Mr., 124
Heuser, Father H., 206, 211
Hickey, Father John, 336
Hilda Kunz, Sister M., 330
Hildebertha Stall, Sister M., 291, 328
Hildegarde, Abbess, daughter of King Ludwig, 47
Himmelgarten (Heavengarden) Convent, 131-132, 135, 168, 198, 200-202, 216, 254, 283, 285-286
Historic Centennial Pageant, by Sister M. Adelaide, 380
Hohen Winde, 5
Hohenberg, 85
Holland, 92
Holy Cross Hospital, Rome, 293
Holy Cross Monastery, Cincinnati, 404
Holy Name School, Dayton, 331, 414
Holy Rosary High School, St. Mary's, O., 332
Holy Rosary School, St. Mary's, O., 414
Holy Trinity Mission Church, Tenn., 208-209
Holy Trinity School, Bryant, Ind., 415
Holy Trinity School, Coldwater, O., 331
Homburger, Christian, 184
Homburger, Father Maximilian, C. PP. S., 116, 130, 174-175, 178, 182, 187
Homburger, Father Peter, C. PP. S., 92

Horstmann, Father William, 123, 126-127
Hummelauer, Madame Caroline, 184
Huron County, O., 100
Hyde Park, Cincinnati, 399, 413

Ignatius, St., 88
Immaculate Conception Chapel, Salem Heights, Dayton, 342
Immaculate Conception High School, Botkins, O., 332
Immaculate Conception High School, Celina, O., 331, 414
Immaculate Conception School, Botkins, O., 414
Immaculate Conception School, Celina, O., 414
Immaculate Conception School, Fulda, O., 292
Immaculate Conception School, Portland, Ind., 399
Immaculate Heart of Mary, Confraternity of the, 155
Immaculate Heart of Mary, shrine of the, Paris, 175
Immaculate Heart School, Phoenix, 399
India, 45
Indianapolis diocese, 347
Indians, 87, 122-123, 276-277, 290, 305-306, 328, 400, 402
Ingenbohl, 292, 373
Innocent, St., 216
Innocentia Verbillet, Sister M., 302
Innsbruck, 297
Insignia of the Sisters of the Precious Blood, 412
Investment ceremony, 248, 300
Irma Roling, Sister M., 334, 336, 362, 401
Irmgardis Dick, Sister M., 210
Irwin, Captain James, 95
Isabelle Missler, Sister M., 302
Isle of Wight, 93
Italy, 49, 52, 379

Jackson, Helen Hunt, 328
Jacob, Father Edward, C. PP. S., 209
Jacomet, Father John B., 91, 110
Jay County, Ind., 132
Jerome, St., 406
Jesuits, 7, 45, 191
Johanna, Gruenfelder, Mother M., arrival in America with relic case, 119, 216; pioneer at Egypt Convent, 139; appointed Mother General, 145; misunderstandings with Father Wittmer, 170, 175; invited to Europe by Father Brunner, 177-178; sets sail with Sister Radygundis, 180; discovers Schellenberg, 181-182; attends Father Brunner in his last illness, 188; letter giving details of his death and burial, 189-191; succeeded as superior at Schellenberg by Sister Radygundis, 272
John II, Prince of the House of Liechtenstein, 182
John of the Cross, St., 406
John Vianney, St., 197, 256
Joseph, St., 9, 60, 114
Joseph Wenceslaus, Prince of the House of Liechtenstein, 181
Josepha Seitz, Sister M., 401
Josephine Boetsch, Mother M., among first students of normal school, 199; elected Mother General, 298; her character, 299-300; her letter to the community, 300-301; building projects, 301-304, 312-314; elected second assistant to Mother Emma and appointed superior of Thompson Convent, 316; death, 344; *in memoriam,* 390
Josephinism, 59
Judas Machabeus, 257
Juditha, daughter of Count Baldwin, 16
Juif, Father Bernardine, 30
Julia Duerler, Sister M., 304, 335
Julie Billiart, Blessed, 282
Julienne High School, Dayton, O., 332
July Revolution of 1830, 30, 105, 156
Juniorate, 350
Junker, Father Henry D., 118
Jura District, 74
Jura range, 5
Jussell, Father Gregory, C. PP. S., 374
Justina Rappe, Sister M., 290

Kalberer, Mary Ann, 183
Kamber, Elizabeth, 25
Kansas City diocese, 400
Karolina Signoretti, Mother, *see* Signoretti, Karolina
Katrischer, Aloysius, 92
Kaup, Mrs. Elizabeth, 399
Kazzis, Canton Grisons, Switz., 56
Keinath, G. J., 327
Keller, Father John, 286-287
Kemper, Father Charles S., 302
Kendalville, Ind., 286
Kieber, Francis Joseph, 188
Kiefer, Fintan, Abbot of Beinwil Abbey, 20

"King of the Missions," *see* San Luis Rey Mission
Kirchenzarten, Baden, 200
Klenke, John J., 358
Kneipp, Dr. (Msgr.), Sebastian, 274, 284
Kneipp Sanitarium, Rome City, Ind., 213, 284-290, 304, 312, 316, 349, 391, 397, 399
Kneipp Springs, 399, 401, 413; *see* Kneipp Sanitarium
Knoepfle, Father Robert, 398
Koester, Father Meinrad B., C. PP. S., 323
Kostka Noel, Sister M., 324
Kreusch, Father Matthias, C. PP. S., 92
Kreusch, Father Peter J., C. PP. S., 92
Kreuzburg, Madam, 185
Kronburg, Landeck, Upper Tyrol, 176-178, 181, 201
Ku Klux Klan, 342
Kunigunda Wehrle, Mother M., arrival in America, 125; superior of Thompson Convent, 144; of Minster Convent, 145; destined to succeed Mother Johanna, 177; receives letter from Rome urging amalgamation with Roman community, 227; on committee of separation, 246; of incorporation, 233; of drafting Constitution, 239; golden jubilee, 248-251; letter to the community, 249-250; letter of congratulation from Archbishop Elder, 250-251; last illness, 263-264; death and burial, 264-266; mentioned, 267, 269, 390
Kunkler, Father Andrew, second American provincial, C. PP. S., arrival in America, 117; befriends Joseph Dwenger during cholera epidemic, 131; appointed pastor of Minster, 131; general director, 197; life sketch, 197-198; establishes St. Charles Seminary, 198-199; opening of first normal school and building projects, 199; handles Albrecht case, 200-203; failure of California province, 205; foundations in Tennessee, 206-213; further building projects, 213; visits Rome and Schellenberg, 214; succeeded by Father Austermann, 214; chairman on committee of separation, 233; resigns Minster pastorate and engages in mission work, 256; account of death, 257; Bishop Dwenger's eulogy, 257-262; burial, 263; mentioned, 313, 390
Kunze, Father Zacharias, 110
La Crosse, Wis., 220
Laags, Vicar of, 43
Lachat, Eugene, Bishop of Basle, 82, 86, 214
Lamberta Pittroff, Sister M., 335
Lang, Cornelius, 267
Lang, Sister M. Cecilia, *see* Cecilia Lang
Lang, William, 153
LaSalette Hageman, Sister M., 398
Latin language, 83, 150, 321
Laura Braun, Sister M., 382
Laurentine Lennartz, Sister M., 335, 398
Laus et honor Sanguini Jesu, motto of the Sister of the Precious Blood, 61, 389, 412
Laux, Father Alphonse, C. PP. S., 211, 286
Lawrence County, Tenn., 206
Lawrenceburg, Tenn., 206-210, 212-213, 331
Leaz, Father, 58
Lehman, Mother M. Magna, *see* Magna Lehman
Leipsic, O., 291-292
Leo III, Pope, 16
Leo VIII, Pope, 48
Leo IX, Pope, 16
Leo XIII, Pope, 230, 390
Lepappe, John, Bishop of Strassburg, 80, 85
Lepontii, tribe of, 37
Lepontine Alps, 37
Les Dombes, France, 256
Lidwina Koller, Sister M., 277-278
Liechtenstein, principality of, 181-182, 370, 389
Lillian Remaklus, Sister M., 402
Lima, O., 287
Lioba Rasmussen, Sister M., 290
Little Flower Academy, *see* San Luis Rey Academy
"Little Germany" (Glandorf), 127
Little Office of the Blessed Virgin, 403
Little Turtle, Miami Indian Chief, 121
Liverpool, England, 92-93
Loewenberg castle, history of, 37-38; description of, 39; purchase of by Father Brunner, 42; mentioned, 48-49, 56, 61, 64, 75, 77, 79, 81-82, 84, 88, 90, 92, 110, 113-114, 116, 119, 155-158, 161, 169, 176, 193, 200, 274, 298, 333, 366, 373, 379, 389, 412, 416
Loewenberg family, 37-38
Loewenberg Institute (boys' school), 40-43, 74; syllabus of, 41

Loewenberg Institute (orphanage), 292, 373, 375-376

Longfellow School, Phoenix, 400

Longinus, 116

Loreto, shrine of, Italy, 51, 171, 178

Loreto, shrine of, Porrentruy, 74-75

Loretto, Tenn., 206, 211-213

Los Angeles, Cal., 381

Louisville and Nashville Railroad, 208

Lourdes grotto, Rome City, 287; Vatican Gardens, 294; Salem Heights, 399

Lucerne, Canton, 156

Lucerne, Canton Lucerne, Switz., 31

Lucius, St., Apostle of the Rhaetians, 181

Lucy Ellerbrock, Sister M., 271

Lucy Joos, Sister M., 119, 125, 162

Ludgeria Bellinghausen, Sister M., 397, 401

Ludovica Scharf, Mother M., elected Mother Coadjutrix, 245, 263; life sketch, 247; letter from Archbishop Elder on amalgamation with Roman Congregation, 229; on committee of incorporation, 233; visits Cincinnati, 240; succeeds Mother Kunigunda, 266; undertakes building projects, 267-271; first trip abroad, 272-273; re-elected, 273; Schellenberg affair, 273-275; second trip abroad, 274; visits the West, 276-277; elected first assistant to Mother Emma, 278-279; favors "kneipping," 274, 284; third trip abroad, 292; erected marble slab to Mother Brunner's memory, 298, 372; favors building new motherhouse at Maria Stein, 339-340; last illness and death, 360-364; mentioned, 386, 390

Ludwig, Brother, 219

Lyons, France, 159-160

McCartyville Public School, McCartyville, O., 414

McCloskey, John Cardinal, 217

Macheboeuf, Father (Bishop) Joseph P., 118

McKinstry, William S., 317

McNicholas, John Timothy, Archbishop of Cincinnati, 280, 332, 347-350, 355-356, 358, 361-362, 365-366, 376, 378-379, 390, 397, 401, 403-404, 410-411, 413

Macrina Kieber, Sister M., 397, 403

Macrina, St., 406

"Mad Anthony," *see* Wayne, General Anthony

Magna Lehman, Mother M., 357, 381, 397-399, 403; summary of events of her generalship (1936-1944), 397-404

Mannheim, 162

Mansuetta Graf, Sister M., 272-273

Mantua, Italy, 16, 297

Manual of the Sisters of the Precious Blood, 366, 400

Margaret Kressing, Sister M., 208

Margaret Schlachter, Sister M., mistress of novices, 270, 274, 277-278; 284-286, 292, 296, 300, 312, 316

Margaret, Sister M. (of Schellenberg), 275

Margritelli, Father Carl J., 92

Maria ad lucem, shrine of, near Trons, 39

Maria-Camp Convent, 128, 208

Maria Einsiedeln (Mary of the Hermits), shrine of, Einsiedeln, Canton Schwyz, Switz., story of, 47-48; visits to, 90, 153-155, 161, 164, 166, 184, 293; *see* Einsiedeln

Maria im Hag, shrine of, Meltingen, Switz., 15

Maria im Stein, picture of, 92, 125

Maria im Stein, shrine of, Maria Stein, Switz., 15; history of shrine, 20-21; visits to, *see* Maria Stein Abbey

Maria-Joseph Home for the Aged, Dayton, 360-362, 391, 401, 403, 413

Maria Steig, shrine of, Thompson, O., 159, 199, 213-214, 338

Maria Stein Abbey, Canton Solothurn, Switz., 20, 22, 28-30, 32, 44, 56, 73, 163-164, 169, 171, 175, 292, 416

Maria Stein Convent, Maria Stein, O., 129-130, 132-133, 135, 138-139, 145, 199, 211, 217, 225, 228, 231, 247, 267, 282, 303, 312, 320-321, 327, 334, 339-342, 352, 363, 398, 401-403, 413-414

Maria Stein, O., 138, 199, 217, 223, 228, 282, 413-414

Maria Stein Public High School, 414

Maria Stein Public School, 414

Marie Alphonse, Mother, of the Visitation Order, 46

Marietta Hoberg, Sister M., 304

Marino, Italy, 392

Marling, Father Joseph M., eighth American provincial, C. PP. S., 404, 410

Martha Hoepf, Sister M., 129

Marti, Father Jacob, C. PP. S., 272, 275
Martin, St., 185
Martina Disch, Sister M., 110
Mary Ann Albrecht, Mother, 66, 110-111, 119, 125-126, 144, 200
Mary at the Crib, Convent of, New Riegel, O., 114-116, 338, 413; *see* New Riegel Convent, Wolfscreek
Mary at the Holy Sepulcher, Convent of, Glandorf, O., 126-127, 337-338; *see* Glandorf Convent
Mary Help of Christians, Convent of, Maria Stein, O., 123-125, 413; *see* Maria Stein Convent
Mary Help of Christians School, Fort Recovery, O., 414
Mary Missler, Sister, 317
Mary Mother of God Convent, Greenwood, O., 128-130, 338; *see* Greenwood Convent
Mary Mother of Good Counsel Convent, Maria-Camp, O., *see* Maria-Camp Convent
Mary Mother of Mercy Chapel, Kneipp Sanitarium, Rome City, Ind., 287
Mary Mother of Mercy Convent, Himmelgarten, O., *see* Himmelgarten Convent
Mary of the Angels Convent, Thompson, O., 120; *see* Thompson Convent; Marywood Pilgrim House
Mary of the Hermits, shrine of, *see Maria Einsiedeln*
Mary Schneider, Sister, O. P., 317
Marydale, near Sherwood, O., 354, 399
Mary's Chapel, *see* Cassella
Mary's Flight into Egypt, Convent of, *see* Egypt Convent
Mary's Home, Convent of, Jay County, Ind., 132-138, 168, 199, 338, 399
Mary's Home (New), Dayton, 271, 301
Marywood Pilgrim House, Marywood, O., 413; *see* Thompson Convent
Marzion, Monsieur M., 91
Massillon, O., 99
Maumee Ford, 121
Mauren, Liechtenstein, 188
Maxima Deppen, Sister M., 335
Maximianus, Emperor, 141
Mediterranean, 367
Meier, Father M. Anthony, C. PP. S., 84, 86, 90-91, 143, 175, 179
Meinrad, St., 47
Meinrada Miller, Sister M., 275
Meisen, Elizabeth (Sister Clara), 56, 61, 71, 135, 161, 375
Meisen, Venantius, 375
Melchior, one of the Magi, 52
Melz, Switz., 183
Memphis, Tenn., 206
Menedora McNally, Sister M., 304
Mercer County Bote, Der, 268
Mercer County, O., 122, 149
Mercer, General Hugh, 122
Mercuria Kraft, Sister M., 403
Merlini, Venerable John, third Moderator General, C. PP. S., 79, 82, 160-161, 164, 170, 179, 197-198, 205
Mervelier, France, 24
Mesa, Maricopa County, Ariz., 354, 400, 415
Mexican Mission School, Mesa, Ariz., 401, 405
Mexicans, 277, 290-291, 305, 328-329, 400, 402, 415
Meyer, Father John, 188
Miami Canal, 122-123
Miami Indians, 121
Miamisburg, O., 254, 382-383, 402, 414
Michael, St., 90
Milan, 56, 293
Milburgis Fischer, Sister M., 245
Millville, O., 400
Milwaukee, 219
Milwaukee diocese, 216
Minster Convent, 130-131, 144, 145, 168, 247, 257, 312
Minster, O., 121, 123, 127, 130-131, 138, 168, 225, 256, 261, 263, 270, 312-313, 318-319, 327, 401, 413
Minster Public High School, 331, 414
Minster Public School, 251, 317, 414
Missa Recitata, 403
Mississippi River, 95-98
Mistress of Novices, appointed without voting, 243; member of Council, 244; new Rule regarding, 282; *see* Nathalia Josberger, Margaret Schlachter, Regula Dann, Theresita Berting
Moderator General, C. PP. S., 142; *see* Gaspar del Bufalo, Valentini, Merlini, Biaschelli
Moeller, Henry, Archbishop of Cincinnati, 297, 300, 302, 308, 334-336, 338-339, 342-343, 347, 349, 355, 361, 390
Monica, St., 21
Mont, Gallus von, 38

Mont, Henry von, 40
Mont, John Henry von, 38
Mont, Lords von, 38, 389
Mont, Peter Anthony von, 38
Montgomery Road, Cincinnati, 302
Montrose, Mo., 331
Moses, 142
Motchi, Charles Borromeo, Abbot of Maria Stein, 25, 416
Mother of Mercy, shrine of, *see* Citailg
Mother of Sorrows, shrine of, *see* Seewis
Mother, title, unofficial, 144; official, 145; Coadjutrix, 243, 245, 247, *see* Ludovica Scharf; General, 145, *see* Johanna Gruenfelder, Kunigunda Wehrle, Ludovica Scharf, Emma Nunlist, Josephine Boetsch, Agreda Sperber, Magna Lehman; method of election, 243
Mount Carmel, near Batavia, O., 353
Mount Olivet Monastery, *see* Oelenberg
Mount St. Mary Seminary, Norwood, O., 170, 356-357, 362, 382, 402, 414
Mount St. Victor Convent, Voralberg, Austria, 178
Mount Vernon, Va., 381
Muelhausen, 80
Muemliswil, Canton Solothurn, Switz., 5, 7-8, 17, 21, 44, 192
Muenster, Westphalia, 122
Myra Luckman, Sister M., 402

Nageleisen, Father Urban, 377
Naples, 367
Napoleon Bonaparte, 52-53; era of, 17
Nashville, Tenn., 206, 210-213, 286
Nathalia Josberger, Sister M., 199, 233
National Archives, Notre Dame, Ind., 416
National Rural Life Conference, 404
Nativity School, Cincinnati, 357
Nau, Monsignor Louis, 358
Negro Mission, Sedalia, Mo., 397-398
Negroes, 199, 268
Nells, Father John, C. PP. S., 397
Neven, Prince-Bishop of Basle, 23
New England States, 45
New Orleans, La., 45, 93-94
New Riegel Convent, 111-112, 114-119, 197, 200, 338, 344, 390, 399, 402-403
New Riegel, O., 109, 111-112, 114, 117-118, 126, 399, 413-414; *see* Wolfscreek
New Riegel Public School, 414
New York City, 110, 154, 158, 168, 217, 231, 273, 292, 366-367, 377
New Zealand, 205
Nicholas, St., 120
Nigsch, Father Francis, C. PP. S., 233, 235
Noble County, Ind., 284
Noll, Francis, Bishop of Fort Wayne, 286, 288
Norbert, St., Canons Regular of, 85
Normal School of the Precious Blood, first opened at Maria Stein, 199; transferred to Greenwood, 231-233; revised curriculum of, 251-252; removed to Maria Stein, 270; high school preparatory added, 323-324; summer session, 323-324; receives state recognition, 326-327; transferred to Salem Heights, 325; discontinued, 350-351; college extension work, 351
Northwest Territory, 87
Norwalk, O., 99-100, 107
Norwood, O., 355-357, 360, 400-402, 413-415
Nothburga Wasmer, Sister M., *see* Wasmer, Salome
Notre Dame de Fourvières, shrine of, Lyons, France, 159-160
Notre Dame de Namur, *see* Sisters of
Notre Dame, Ind., 416
Novaora College, Olleggia, Canton Schwyz, Switz., 45
Novice Mistress, *see* Mistress of Novices
Novices, *see* Novitiate
Novitiate, in pioneer days, 146-147; at Greenwood, 232; at Maria Stein, 269-270; canonically established, 282; new building at Maria Stein, 283; at Salem Heights, 341-342; training of, 343; change in novices' headgear, 349; *see* Mistress of Novices; Normal School
Nunlist, Mother M. Emma, *see* Emma Nunlist
Nuntius Aulae, 416

Oath of Fidelity, 147, 244, 247
Oberhauser, Father Isidore, 349
Oberland, Switz., 39
Obermueller, Father Xavier, 150, 171
Obersaxen, Switz., 87
Obladis, Tyrol, 175, 284
Oceanside, Cal., 329, 354, 399
Oelenberg Trappist Monastery, Upper Alsace, 28-30, 163

Offenburg, Alsace, 23
Ohio, foundations in Northern, 105-120; in Western, 121-140
Ohio province of the Congregation of the Most Precious Blood, 205; *see* Congregation of the Most Precious Blood
Ohio River, 121
Ohio State Department of Education, 327
Ohio Weisenfreund, 267
Oldenburg, Germany, 225
Oliva Schupp, Sister M., 231
Olten, Canton Solothurn, Switz., 56
O'Neill, Jerome, 331
Opus Dei, 22
Ora et labora, Benedictine motto, 21, 112
Osterloh, George, 129
Ostrogoths, 181
Oswald, Father, 201-202
Oswalda Hoege, Sister M., 304, 312
Ottawa, O., 331-332, 414-415
Otter Tail County, Minn., 202
Ottilia Heckman, Sister M., 316
Ottke, Father Henry, 213
Ottoville, O., 292, 414
Ottoville Public High School, 332, 414
Ottoville Public School, 292, 414
Our Lady of Carmel Church, Cincinnati, 351
Our Lady of Good Counsel Church, Cleveland, 303
Our Lady of Good Counsel High School, Cleveland, 332
Our Lady of Good Counsel School, Cleveland, 303-304, 414
Our Lady of Good Hope School, Miamisburg, O., 414
Our Lady of Grace Mission House, Cincinnati, 302-303
Our Lady of Perpetual Help, shrine of, Kronburg, 176
Our Lady of the Precious Blood Convent, Salem Heights, Dayton, 413
Our Lady of the Precious Blood School, Salem Heights, Dayton, 414
Our Lady of Victory, shrine of, Paris, 175
Our Mother of Miracles Church, Rush Lake, Minn., 202
Ozarks, Mo., 354

Pader Ner, 36
Pader Sogn, 36
Pala, Cal., 354, 399
Pallotti, Father Vincent, 54
Palma Hafner, Sister M., 353
Palmieri, Salvatore, Archbishop of Brindisi, 295
Papal States, 52
Paris, 91, 155, 163, 180
Passwang range, 5
Patrick, St., 406
Patrizi, Constantine Cardinal, 216
Paul, St., 215, 260, 405
Paula, St., 406
Perpetual adoration of the Precious Blood, Mother Brunner's wish regarding, 3, 61, 68; practice of, 61-62, 110, 125, 127-128, 130, 132, 134, 137-138, 140, 142, 148, 183, 208, 218, 248, 264, 277, 285, 288, 295, 313, 336, 345, 393, 407; chapels of, 111, 120, 125, 127, 129, 131-132, 137, 139, 195, 390; chapels abandoned, 336-338; original object of Sisters, C. PP. S., 114, 272, 346
Perpetual exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Mother Emma's desire for, 339-340, 346-347; solemn opening of, 348; controversy concerning, 348
Peru, O., 99, 105, 143
Pestalozzi, 40
Peter, Abbot of Oelenberg, 30, 32, 77
Peter, St., 58, 293
Petersburg, O., 127
Peyri, Father Antonio, O. F. M., 320
Pfluger, Boniface, Abbot of Maria Stein (1841-1851), 22, 24, 169
Philippine Foltz, Sister M., 361
Philomena, St., 216
Philothea Dick, Sister M., 290
Phoenix, Ariz., 290-291, 304-306, 327-328, 330, 354, 384, 399, 401, 415
Piacenza, Italy, 53
Piazza St. Damaso, Vatican, 369
Pielenhofen, 46
Pierz, Father Francis, 203
Pious Union of the Precious Blood, 53-54
Pittsburgh, Pa., 113
Pius VII, Pope, 52, 54
Pius IX, Pope, 166, 217
Pius X, Pope, 296-297, 390
Pius XI, Pope, 369-370, 390, 397-398
Pius XII, Pope, 390
Placidus, Abbot, *see* Ackermann, Placidus
Plus, Father Raoul, S. J., 299
Poli, Via, Rome, 368
Poor Clares, 337
Porrentruy, 74-75, 82
Portland, Ind., 283, 399
Portuguese language, 55

Postulants, in pioneer days, 146; recruited from abroad, 158, 162, 167, 171, 173, 187, 272-274, 277-278, 292, 298, 306-307, 326; increase in number of American, 326; change in headgear, 401; *see* Novitiate

Potomac River, 381

Precious Blood Church, Fort Wayne, 271

Precious Blood High School, Salem Heights, Dayton, 414

Precious Blood School, Fort Wayne, 271, 415

Precious Blood, the, Archconfraternity of, 15, 53; Confraternity of, 53; Confraternity of Perpetual Adoration of, 183; Chaplet of, 148; Mother Brunner's devotion to, 3, 15, 17, 54, 61, 67-68; general devotion to, 148-149; devotions in honor of, 62; *Manual of the Sisters of*, 366, 400; Pious Union of, 53-54; shrine of, *see* Weingarten; Sisters of, *see* Congregation of the Most; Sisters Adorers of the Most

Prisca Simbeck, Sister M., 324

Probst, Adam, 5

Probst, Elizabeth, 6

Probst, Elizabeth Fueg, 5

Probst, Jacob, 6

Probst, John, brother of Mother Brunner, 6

Probst, Joseph, 5-6

Probst, Professor John, 40, 43, 56-58, 169

Profession, ceremony of, 248, 300; *see* Vows

Propaganda, Sacred Congregation of, Rome, 50, 56, 59, 78; Prefect of, *see* Pedizini

Propagation of the Faith, Society for the, 89, 159-160

Providentia Goshe, Sister M., 402

Provincial of American Province, C. PP. S., 143; *see* Brunner, Mary Francis de Sales; Kunkler, Andrew; Austermann, Bernard; Drees, Henry; Russ, Boniface; Marling, Joseph M.

Prudentia Hune, Sister M., 324

Pruenster, George, Bishop of Feldkirch, 85

Pulaski, Tenn., 207

Pulskamp, Dr. Bernard, 312

Purcell, John Baptist, (Bishop) Archbishop of Cincinnati, 87-89, 91-93, 99, 106-107, 123, 125, 149, 158, 162, 169-170, 174-175, 179, 202-203, 219, 390, 416

Putnam County, O., 126, 327

Quatman, Father Francis M., 278, 322

Queen of Peace Mission, Millville, O., 400

Queloz, Father, S. J., 57-58

Rademacher, Joseph, Bishop of Nashville, 214

Radygundis Gerteis, Sister M., 177-180, 190, 272-273

Raesz, Andrew, Bishop of Strassburg, 65

Ramiswil, Canton Solothurn, Switz., 5-6

Ramona, by Helen Hunt Jackson, 328

Rappe, Amadeus, Bishop of Toledo, 127, 153-154, 158-159, 162, 164, 168-169, 174, 197, 200

Rath, Father Luke, C. PP. S., 303

Ray, Ariz., 354-355, 399

Razins, Canton Grisons, Switz., 59

Rebecca Hercher, Sister M., 144

Reckenkien, near Muemliswil, Switz., 5

Redemptorists, 106-107

Regina High School, Norwood, O., 355-360, 400-402, 414

Regina Reichert, Sister M., 123

Regis Kirschner, Sister M., 292, 342, 397, 401

Regula Dann, Sister M., 299, 312, 316, 326, 335, 343

Regula Winterhalter, Sister M., 144

Rehring, George J., Auxiliary Bishop of Cincinnati, 399, 404, 413

Reichert, Father Augustine, C. PP. S., 208

Reign of Terror, 8

Reiler's Creek, near Glandorf, O., 153

Reinhold, Father Louis G., 368-369

Relic Chapel, Salem Heights, Dayton, 398

Relics, 119; devotion to, 215; collection acquired by Father Gartner, 216-217; Maria Stein Chapel becomes shrine of, 217-220; plans for new chapel, 221; controversy concerning, 221-222; dedication and description of new chapel, 222-223

Rensselaer, Ind., 292, 321, 415

Resurrection School, Dayton, 414

Reuter, Father Paul, C. PP. S., 170

Reverman, Theodore H., Bishop of Superior, 288

Rex, the, 366-367, 377, 392

Rhaetia, province of, 37, 181, 284
Rhaetians, 181
Rhine River, 37, 181, 373
Rieder, Peter, 293
Rimini, Italy, 165
Ringele, Father Jacob, C. PP. S., 91
Robers, Father Bernard, 383
Roche d'Or, Mont, 82
Rockford, O., 354
Roesch, Frances, 44
Roessner, Father Clement, C. PP. S., 317
Rogata Ruth, Sister M., 399, 401
Rogatus, St., 216, 286
Rohjans, Father Paul, C. PP. S., 211-212
Rohnersville, Cal., 205
Roman College, Rome, 52
Roman province of the Sisters Adorers of the Most Precious Blood, 227
Romansch language, 35, 135, 169
Rome, 8, 34-35, 40, 44, 50-53, 58, 65, 69, 73, 77-78, 85, 88-89, 162, 165, 167, 170-171, 178-180, 198, 214, 216-217, 220, 226-231, 292-297, 366-370, 376, 392
Rome City, Ind., 213, 284-285, 289, 338, 380, 413
Rosalia Goldschmid, Sister M., 116, 144-145
Rosalie Albrecht, Sister M., 66, 110, 113, 116, 119, 126, 200
Rosalie Alt, Sister M., 324-326, 342, 352, 391
Rosamunda Hoying, Sister M., 329
Rose Nageleisen, Sister M., 342
Rose, St., 114, 164
Rosella Ehrbar, Sister M., 328-329
Rotterdam, 110, 162
Rotterdam, Bishop of, 175
Ruesheim, 80
Rueys, Bishop of Greek Lithuanian Rite, 367
Ruf, Father Engelbert, C. PP. S., 117
Rule of the Sisters of the Precious Blood, original, 62; revised according to model of Gaspar del Bufalo's, 146; second revision (1846), 146; approved by Bishop of Chur, 146, 158; Merlini suggests accepting Roman, 160-161; Father Brunner's attempts to obtain papal approbation of, 164-165, 174; remained independent of Roman Rule, 226-230; revised and Constitution added, 239, 241-244; *see* Rules and Constitutions; Constitution
Rules and Constitutions, new draft of, 239, 241-244; temporarily approved, 246; final approbation of, 246-247, 365; *see* Rule; Constitution
Ruma, Ill., 288
Rural Life Institute, 404
Ruschein, 156
Rush Lake, Minn., 202-204
Russ, Father Boniface, fifth American provincial, C. PP. S., 311, 321
Russia, O., 270, 415
Russia Public High School, 414
Russia Public School, 304, 415
Ryan, Daniel J., Secretary of State, 233
Ryan, Dr. (Msgr.) Carl J., 351

Sabina McEvoy, Sister M., 290
Sacred Heart Academy, Phoenix, 291
Sacred Heart Convent, Lawrenceburg, Tenn., 208-210, 213
Sacred Heart Convent, Loretto, Tenn., 211
Sacred Heart Relic Chapel, Maria Stein, O., 220; *see* Relics
Sacred Heart School (Mexican), Mesa, Maricopa County, Ariz., 401, 405
Sacred Heart School, Sedalia, Mo., 397, 399, 415
Sagens, Canton Grisons, Switz., 38, 69-70, 157, 274, 298, 372-374, 392
Sailer, Father Joseph, 401
Sailer, Father Joseph A., 181
St. Agnes' School, Cincinnati, 357
St. Alexius' Church, Rome, 294
St. Aloysius' Orphanage, Cincinnati, 357
St. Aloysius Seminary, C. PP. S., Thompson, O., 143; Himmelgarten, O., 198
St. Alphonse's Church, Peru, O., 99-100, 107-110, 118
St. Anthony's College, Santa Barbara, Cal., 328
St. Anthony's Mexican School, Phoenix, 290
St. Anthony's School, Columbus Grove, O., 415
St. Augustine's Church, Minster, O., 130, 198
St. Augustine's School, Rensselaer, Ind., 292, 415
St. Barbara's School, Cloverdale, O., 292, 415
St. Bernard's School, Burkettsville, O., 292

St. Boniface's Church, New Riegel, O., 109, 111
St. Boniface's Indian School, Banning, Cal., 276
St. Calixtus, Catacombs of, 294
St. Cecilia's Academy, Nashville, 210-211, 213, 317
St. Charles Archives, Carthagena, O., 416
St. Charles Seminary, Carthagena, O., 199, 225, 333, 398, 402, 414
St. Clair, General Arthur, 121-122
St. Denis' School, Versailles, O., 415
St. Dominic's Monastery, Rome, 294
St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Dayton, 383
St. Elizabeth's School, Norwood, O., 357
St. Felix in Giano, Church of, Rome, 53
St. Francis Xavier's School, St. Joseph, Mo., 270, 415
St. Gall, Canton, Switz., 275
St. Giovanni in Laterano, Via, Rome, 227
St. Gregory's Seminary, Cincinnati, 336, 362, 382, 414
St. Henry, O., 151, 254
St. Henry's Church, St. Henry, O., 131
St. John Lateran, Basilica of, Rome, 367-368
St. John Nepomucene, Chapel of, Loewenberg, 70
St. John's Church, Glandorf, O., 127, 198
St. John's Church, Maria Stein, O., 123-125, 131, 198-199, 218, 221-223, 254, 282
St. John's Indian Mission, Ariz., 305-306
St. John's School, Deer Park, O., 331, 357
St. John's School, Maria Stein, O., 125, 324
St. Joseph, Mo., 270, 292, 402-403, 415
St. Joseph's Church, Lawrenceburg, Tenn., 207-209
St. Joseph's Church, St. Joseph, O., 131, 200, 203
St. Joseph's College, Collegeville, Ind., 321, 323, 333, 414
St. Joseph's College, Rohnersville, Cal., 205
St. Joseph's High School, Wapakoneta, O., 304, 414
St. Joseph's Hospital, Phoenix, 291
St. Joseph's Mission Church, Tenn., 211-212
St. Joseph's Orphanage (Home), Dayton, 254-255, 271, 301, 341, 349, 391, 401, 413
St. Joseph's School (Colored), Sedalia, Mo., 398, 415
St. Joseph's School, Wapakoneta, O., 415
St. Lorenzo, Church of, Rome, 55
St. Lucius Seminary, Chur, 43, 58
St. Margaret Mary's School, North College Hill, Cincinnati, 415
St. Mark's Church, Cincinnati, 302-303, 356
St. Mark's School, Cincinnati, 302-303, 357, 415
St. Mary of the Woods Academy, Ind., 252
St. Mary's Church, Dayton, O., 271, 403
St. Mary's Church, Sagens, Switz., 38, 69-71, 157, 274, 298, 372-375, 392
St. Mary's Church, Schellenberg, 182
St. Mary's Convent, New Einsiedeln, Tenn., 209-210
St. Mary's High School, Dayton, 331-332
St. Mary's High School, Phoenix, 331, 414
St. Mary's Hospital, Cincinnati, 381
St. Mary's Institute, Minster, O., 131, 254, 313, 316
St. Mary's Mission Church, Tenn., 208
St. Mary's Novitiate (Home), Burkettsville, O., 334, 414
St. Mary's, O., 332, 414
St. Mary's School, Dayton, 271, 415
St. Mary's School, Leipsic, O., 291
St. Mary's School, Phoenix, 290-291, 327-328, 400, 415
St. Mary's School, St. Joseph, Mo., 292, 402, 415
St. Matthew's School, Norwood, O., 357
St. Michael's Church, Peru, O., 106
St. Michael's Church, Thompson, O., 118
St. Michael's School, Marywood, O., 415
St. Odielien Convent, Hohenberg, Alsace, 85-86
St. Patrick's School, Bellefontaine, O., 292
St. Patrick's School, Troy, O., 402, 415
St. Peter's Chapel, Grossluetzel, 30

St. Peter's Church, Rome, 54, 293-296, 368-369
St. Peter's Church, Schleuis, Switz., 70, 373
St. Peter's School, Alvada, O., 415
St. Petersthal, Switz., 84
St. Rose's Church, St. Rose, O., 129, 198
St. Rose's School, Fulton, Cincinnati, 270, 359
St. Theresa's Home for the Aged, Cincinnati, 335, 397
St. Thérèse of Lisieux, Oratory of, Maria-Joseph Home, Dayton, 361
St. Vincent de Paul's Society, le Havre, 91
St. Wendelin, O., 270
St. Xavier's College, Bombay, India, 45
St. Xavier's College, Cincinnati, 325, 350
St. Xavier's University, Cincinnati, 351
Sts. Peter and Paul High School, Ottawa, O., 332, 414
Sts. Peter and Paul School, Norwood, O., 357, 359, 415
Sts. Peter and Paul School, Ottawa, O., 415
Salem Heights Archives, Dayton, 416
Salem Heights, Dayton, 338, 378, 386, 398, 403-404, 413, 415
Salesia Weisenberger, Sister M., 116
Salux, Canton Grisons, Switz., 49, 164
San Basilia, Via, Rome, 293
San Bernardini, Rhaetia, 161, 164, 284
San Francisco, Cal., 383
San Luis Rey Academy, 330-331, 355, 360, 414-415
San Luis Rey Mission, 328-330, 355, 360, 384
San Nicola in Carcere, Church of, Rome, 54, 61
San Paolo fuori le mura, Church of, Rome, 293, 368
San Salvatore in Campo, Mission House of, Rome, 165, 179
Sandusky, O., 118, 150, 154
Santa Barbara, Cal., 328
Santa Cecilia, Church of, Rome, 294
Santa Margarita Ranch, Cal., 331
Santa Maria in Trastevere, Church of, Rome, 294
Santa Maria in Trivio, Church of, Rome, 294, 297, 368
Santa Maria Maggiori, Church of, Rome, 297, 368
Santa Sabina, Church of, Rome, 294
Schaeper, Father Joseph, C. PP. S., 293-294, 296-297, 368
Scharf, Mother M. Ludovica, *see* Ludovica Scharf
Schellenberg Convent, Liechtenstein, 181-186, 189, 214, 272-275, 292, 297, 370-373, 375, 379, 389, 392
Schemmel, John, 130
Scherzinger, Michael, 150
Schill, Father Kilian, C. PP. S., 209
Schlachter, Father Godfrey, C. PP. S., 204, 209, 233, 252-253, 288, 292, 312
Schleuis, Canton Grisons, Switz., 37-38, 70, 373-374
Schloewis, *see* Schluven
Schluven, Lords von, 38
Schmid, Father Carl, O. S. B., 25
Scholastica Brunner, Sister, *see* Brunner, Maria Anna Frances
Scholastica, St., 406
Schools, 116-119, 130, 149-151, 208, 270-271, 302-304, 328-332, 355-360; listed, 414-415
Schools, Vacation, 353-355, 398-400, 402
Schrembs, Joseph (Bishop) Archbishop of Cleveland, 288, 337, 383
Schuele, Father Rochus, C. PP. S., 206, 211
Schuette, Father Alexius, C. PP. S., 349, 383, 398
Schupp, Father Liberat, C. PP. S., 231, 338
Schwyz, Canton, 156
Schwyz, Canton Schwyz, Switz., 31
Scottsdale, Ariz., 400
Sedalia, Mo., 354, 397, 415
Seewis, Canton Grisons, Switz., 36, 44, 83, 89, 157
Seifert, Father August, C. PP. S., 195, 197, 287, 320-323, 340, 348-349, 398
Semina Lauter, Sister M., 362
Sendbote, Der, 267
Seneca County, O., 111-112, 405
Separation, act of, 239
Seraphina Ellerbrock, Sister M., 199
Shalk, Father Francis, C. PP. S., 341
Shawnee Indians, 121
Shelby County, O., 149
Sherwood, O., 399
Shields, Dr. Thomas E., 323, 334-335
Shilter, Father Karl, 374
Sidney, O., 278
Signoretti, Mother Karolina, 226-229
Simplicia McGreevy, Sister M., 353-354, 397, 399-401, 403

Sincero, Luigi Cardinal, 369, 376
Singer, Fidel, 169
Sisters Adorers of the Most Precious Blood, Rome, 80, 145-146, 160, 226, 229, 296
Sisters of Charity, 336, 359
Sisters of Mercy, 213, 291
Sisters of Mercy of St. Vincent de Paul, Ingenbohl, 373
Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, 150, 271, 282, 332
Sisters of Providence, St. Mary's of the Woods, Ind., 252
Sisters of St. Agnes, 398
Sisters of St. Joseph (Carondelet), 276-277, 305
Sisters of the Precious Blood, The, legal title; *see* Congregation of the Most Precious Blood
Sixta Enneking, Sister M., 401
Solothurn, Bishop of, 43
Solothurn, Canton, Switz., 5
Sonderbund, the, 156
Sonnenberg range, 5
Sonora, Ariz., 354, 399
Sophia Steiert, Sister M., 161
Soubry, Monsieur (Captain), 93
South Africa, 205
South Italy Province of the Sisters Adorers of the Most Precious Blood, 227
Spain, 278, 367
Spaniards, the, 278, 330
Sperber, Mother M. Agreda, *see* Agreda Sperber
Springfork, Mo., 400
Staefeli, Father H., 176
Stallo, Franz Joseph, 122
Stallotown (Minster), O., 122
Stanislaus Kostka, St., 45
Stein, Canton Aargau, Switz., 177, 180
Stelzer, Caspar, 199, 219
Stelzer, Christian, 124
Stephenson Public School, Phoenix, 399
Stevenson (Stephenson), Dr. A., 276, 309
Stiefvater, Father Andrew, C. PP. S., 209
Strassburg, 56, 169, 180
Stritch, Samuel Alphonse, Archbishop of Chicago, 317, 391
Stuhlmueller, Father Edward, 353
Stukenborg, Father L. J., 271
Sturni, Signora, 54
Summer Institutes, 307-309
Superior, Ariz., 354, 399
Sursee, George von, 71
Suter, Dr., 188
Sutter, Frank, 283
Swabia, 175
Swiss, the, 4, 8, 11
Switzerland, shrines of, 15ff, 20-22, 163-164; suppression of Jesuits in, 45; in need of reform, 59-60; political crisis (1847-1848), 156, 416
Syllabus of Loewenberg Institute, 41
Sylvan Lake, Rome City, Ind., 285, 287-289
Sylvester, Father, 74-75

Teachers' College, Athenaeum of Ohio, Cincinnati, 351
Tecumseh, Shawnee Indian Chief, 122
Telegraph-Register, see Catholic Telegraph
Tempe, Ariz., 399
Templeton, Ia., 304
Tennessee, foundations in, 206-213
Terasp, 171
Terentia Cordonnier, Sister M., 402
Teresa Didier, Sister M., 290
Teresa of Avila, St., 176, 406
Tertia Meier, Sister M., 403
Teutons, 181
Thais Meyer, Sister M., 144
Thea Zipfel, Sister M., 161
Theban Legion, 141
Theodoric, King of the Ostrogoths, 181
Theonilla Zipfel, Sister M., 161
Thérèse of the Child Jesus, St., 407
Theresita Berting, Sister M., 342, 397
Thill, Francis A., Bishop of Concordia, 391
Thomas, the Apostle, St., 51
Thompson Convent, 120, 145, 344
Thompson, O., 117-118, 143, 153-154, 162, 199-200, 247
Thonon, France, 46
Tiberius Caesar, 37
Tiffin, O., 108
Timon, John, Bishop of Buffalo, 154
Tin Village, Ariz., 400
Toledo, O., 122, 168
Tomils, Canton Grisons, Switz., 35, 40
Trappists, 27, 73
Treaty of Greenville, 87
Trendle, Francis, 86
Trent, 297
Trois Epis, 85; *see Drei Aehren*
Trons, Canton Grisons, Switz., 39
Trost, Father Paulinus, C. PP. S., 272
Troy, O., 402, 415
"Trumpet of the Precious Blood," 53
Tschenhens, Father Francis X., C. SS. R., 118

Tuor, Dr. A., 375-376
Tyrol, 171

University of Dayton, 325
Unterwalden, Canton, Switz., 156
Urbain, Father Joseph, 404
Uri, Canton, Switz., 156
Ursula Hegg, Sister M., 139
Ursus, St., 216

Vacation Schools, *see* Schools, Vacation
Vaduz, 181
Valais, Canton, Switz., 156
Valendaz-Sagens, 372
Valentia Braun, Sister M., 291
Valentini, Blase, second Moderator General, C. PP. S., 78-81, 86
Valley City, O., 200
Valz, Canton Grisons, Switz., 84
Van den Broeck, Father John, C. PP. S., 91-92, 123, 153, 155, 157-158, 268-269
Van Kilsdonk, Mrs., 331, 360
Vatican, 296, 369; Gardens, 294
Vehr, Urban J., (Bishop) Archbishop of Denver, 362, 413
Vendelincourt, Canton Berne, Switz., 74, 76
Venice, 217
Venzins, Father Florian, 372
Verona, Italy, 297
Veronica, Sister (Schellenberg), 371
Vesta, 91-93
Victor, St., 216
Victoria Drees, Sister M., 252, 270, 290, 299, 303-304, 307, 316, 342, 363, 365, 382, 391, 398, 403
Victoria Gerspach, Sister M., 274
Victoria, St., 216
Vienna, 183-184
Villa, Aegidius von Mont, 38
Vincennes diocese, 252
Vincenz, Bishop of Chur, 369, 371-372, 374-376
Visitandines of St. Augustine, 160
Visitation Nuns, 45-46, 160
Visitation of Mary, Convent of the, Minster, O., 130-131, 312-313; *see* Minster Convent; Annunciation
Vista, Cal., 354, 399
Voag, Father Albert, C. PP. S., 320
Vonder Haar, Father Edward J., C. PP. S., 398, 402
Voralberg, Austria, 178
Vows, early formula of private, 147; Father Brunner's attempts to introduce public profession of into Congregation, 162, 164-165; public profession of, 247-248, 300

Wabash River, 122
Wagner, Father Ignatius, seventh American provincial, C. PP. S., 379
Wahrheitsfreund, Der, 268
Walburga, St., 406
Wallischeck, Father Peter, O. F. M., 328-330
Walnut Hills High School, Cincinnati, 356
Walz, Father Max, C. PP. S., 288
Wanatah, Ind., 254
Wapakoneta, O., 127, 304, 414-415
Ward, Father Kenneth, C. P., 404
Washington, D. C., 323, 325, 334-336, 398
Washington, George, 121
Wasmer, Salome (Sister Nothburga), 56, 61, 65, 85-86, 161
Wayne, General Anthony, 122
Wehrle, Mother M. Kunigunda, *see* Kunigunda Wehrle
Weingarten, Wuertemberg, 15-16
Weissenstein, Mt., 4-5
Wellsville, O., 99
Weniger, Father Francis X., S. J., 204
Werdenberg, Canton St. Gall, Switz., 188
Westendorf, Mrs. John, 361
Weston, Mo., 257, 262
Westphalia, Germany, 126, 183
Weyman, Father Arnold, C. PP. S., 323
Whitaker, Dr., 276
Wiener, Michael, 353
Wight, Isle of, 92
Willi, Father Willibald, C. PP. S., 132-138
Willi, Jacob, 135, 164
Wiseman, Nicholas Cardinal, 294
Wittmer, Father John of the Cross, C. PP. S., 91, 129, 138-139, 143, 150, 169, 171, 174-175, 177, 187, 196, 201, 209-210
Woerishofen, Bavaria, 274, 284
Wolfscreek, O., 108, 115-116, 119, 144, 148, 150, 153; *see* New Riegel, O.
Wooster, O., 99

Xavier Pistorius, Sister M., 113

Yacque Indians, 400

Ziegler, Father Jerome, O. S. B., 25
Zimberlin, Father Anthony, 80
Zug, Canton, Switz., 156
Zurich, Switz., 47, 73, 90-91, 370